

IN CURE OF
HER SOUL

F · J · STIMSON

(*J. S. of DALE*)

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IN CURE OF HER SOUL

OTHER WORKS OF FICTION
BY F. J. STIMSON

FIRST HARVESTS.

OUR CONSUL AT CARLSRUHE.

THE CRIME OF HENRY VANE.

THE SENTIMENTAL CALENDAR.

JETHRO BACON OF SANDWICH; THE WEAKER SEX.

MRS KNOLLYS AND OTHER STORIES.

THE RESIDUARY LEGATEE.

IN THREE ZONES.

KING NOANETT.

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GUERNDALÉ.

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"The operatives all clustered around Mary Ravenel."

IN CURE OF HER SOUL

BY

FREDERIC JESUP STIMSON

"Playes made from hallie tales I holde unmeete;
Lette somme greate storie of a manne be songe."
—CHATTERTON.



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BOOK ONE

SAGA :

*“Oh, it was Olaf Trygvassen,
Sailing o’er the grey seas young.”*

I

IT was a little nook of meadow, sloping to a point where the forest edges met. Behind, the hill rose, rocky, covered close with old dwarfed trees. The sun lay hot in the little triangle of lawn, but from the narrow combe below came a strong draught of cool salt air. There the Sea lay, masked.

Altogether one of the sweetest of those sweet places on the Beverly shore where the sea and forest touch: appreciated as such by the good taste of Mrs Arthur Shirley and thought worthy, without alteration, of forming a nook within her lawn.

Had you asked young Austin Pinckney, four-and-twenty as he lay there, whether the drama of his life lay yet behind him, I think he would have been honest enough to tell you No. Most young men, however young, fancy they have had experiences; as they fancy always that they are in love: they want to be, and it is quite enough if they like any one girl better than another. But Pinckney was no fool; and, born in Germany, he had lived in Paris, had been through colleges in America and England, and now came to the land of his fathers

“for good.” For the one thing his somewhat purposeless father had determined (he had lived his life as Consul at Carlsruhe) was that his son Charles should make a career at home.

Pinckney, then, had had no experiences—no more than the brook beside which he lay; which was born but a few rods behind him, by some hoary gray rocks in the wood, in a cradle of pines, gurgled merrily out into its first sunlight, sunny and clear; it showed its depths to the sky; then with hardly a fall, it sprang through the little combe and, still all ignorant whether it was to become a Mississippi or a Merrimac, it met the ocean—and all was over. So soon born, so soon to enter the sea.

Pinckney's plans had been to enter public life. It is more difficult in America than in England, and for that purpose, not with much view to practice, he meant to study the law. In America a man must take some mask of serving himself if he would serve his country.

For the furtherance of these two ambitions, he intended to maintain a small office in some upper floor on Pine Street, and had already become an active member of the New York Civil Service Reform Club. Furthermore, he had written an essay upon the Australian ballot and had become a member of the Charity Organization Society. He was now

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considering whether he should go to the Cambridge Law School or first pass a year with the New York firm whose leading partner was their family trustee.

If he had any other musings, plannings, or dreamings—they were probably plannings: one only dreams of the unattainable—the day and place discouraged all but dreams. And even if our hero had the wish so strongly as to be the subject of a dream, the very real Miss Dorothy Somers that was its object was so tangible and near a possibility (she only lived so far away as Philadelphia) as hardly to disturb his waking hours. Her he had met abroad: with her he had come through that American form of trying-it-on flirtation which (however unelevated) serves a practical nation a practical purpose. It is as much as to say, Would we like it were we wed? And—wisely perhaps—our matrons allow their young to spend half the day and night together, to see if they are bored in that. She was very beautiful, only eighteen; certainly he had been “taken with her.”

But that she filled no great space, in his mind at least, for the moment, would appear from the start with which he heard her name mentioned. For his musings, plannings, dreamings were disturbed just here by old Tom Brandon, called by all the world the Major, who sauntered agreeably up to

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tell him, first, that the dressing-bell had sounded, and second (but of less personal importance) that young Gansevoort was "caught" at last.

"And by the Somers, of all people in the world," said he, "Miss Dorothy Somers; they say she is a beauty."

And this it was that made our hero start; could the Major have been aware? But furthermore he said nothing; and the two went in to dinner.

It must not be thought Tom Brandon was a gossip. Men really do not gossip so much as women; and Tom Brandon only liked to hear the news: he did not fabricate it, nor anticipate it; and when he had fairly heard it, he dismissed it from his mind with, at most, a remark or two. No, he was not a gossip; but he took a kindly interest in the affairs of men. He belonged to that large fellowship who must get their interest in life from the lives of others, not their own. They are not to be confounded with an analogous company that live on others' money, houses, and yachts, and give return of gossip and fine raiment; he was rich enough; to the race of our Tom belong the nobler renunciators and the kindly companions. Perhaps he had had a dream in his youth; a dream with no awakening. And Tom had taken a fancy to our hero; forgive him, then, his little experiment.

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“Gansevoort? Petrus Gansevoort? Why, he’s half-witted,” was all our hero said, as they approached the veranda from the lawn.

“Oh, no—only reserved—kept apart from an avid world,” said Tom. But Pinckney had pulled himself together and expressed himself no more. From which Mr Brandon was too old a bird to draw conclusions.

II

MRS ARTHUR SHIRLEY was Austin Pinckney’s first cousin. Her mother’s sister had been Mary Austin, who married her cousin Charles Pinckney, and died many years before. As they walked up her lawn there was a glimmer of bright dresses on the veranda, no unpleasant thing to see even when a man is hungry; and a glimmer of white arms and shoulders (for dinner was at eight, to do no injustice to her sunset), no unpleasant thing to see even when a man is cold. And there was already an evening chill in the air.

There was a murmur of excited voices as our men came up. It was soon evident that they, too, were discussing the great engagement; that gossamer “maiden’s yes” that determined the future of so many millions. Our dear old Doctor Holmes

has told us of that yes of another Dorothy, and that it determined future men; yet probably the newspapers of that time did not chronicle it. But to-morrow you would find in most newspapers of the land a space awarded to this affirmative of Dorothy's rather more than was given to the great labor troubles—only less perhaps than they accorded to a murder with an ax, followed by dissection, authorship unknown. There would be a picture of the murdered woman's body; perhaps also there would now be one of Miss Somers; her person would at all events be described minutely, as well as the contents of Gansevoort's purse.

The girls did not stop talking upon Pinckney's approach, and he felt glad of the chance that he had had previous notice of their news; not dreaming that old Tom Brandon had wandered in the shrubberies for half an hour to find him. But it was evident that some of them, at least, did not take the newspaper view of the situation. If some of the girls were dazzled by its prominence, most American women fortunately are too fine for any solution of life problems but the truth. A woman of thirty, just married (and American girls at thirty are at their best), spoke openly. "I have had a letter from a friend in Philadelphia," she said. "She tells me that her mother has brought

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the whole thing about. She was a Riddle, you know."

Pinckney excused himself on the plea that he must dress for dinner. A leather bag for the house letters hung always at the Shirleys' front door; his eye caught it as he passed, and going to his room, he seized a sheet of note-paper and began to write. He had but half an hour to dress, and twenty minutes were spent in the writing of this note:

"DEAR MISS SOMERS:

"Is it true—what I heard to-day? Are you engaged?

"Yours,

"C. A. PINCKNEY."

Fifteen minutes of the time was spent in determining the adverb. He wrote "Yours ever," "Yours sincerely," "Yours faithfully," and finally settled on just "Yours." He addressed the note and sealed it carefully. Then he dressed hurriedly, still thinking; so carelessly that his tie became an object of contemptuous notice to Sammy Bowles, downstairs. As Pinckney came down and crossed the slippery hall, he saw that all the company had gone in to dinner. He stopped a moment by the leather post-bag, the note in his hand. Then he tore it up, threw the fragments carefully in the fireplace, and went in.

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It has been said that you have three chances of happiness at a dinner (wherein it is three times a better thing than life)—the woman to the left of you, the woman to the right of you, and the cook. Older men, they say, have a fourth in the bottle. But youth is indifferent to its chances, exacts its choice of fate, and has a digestion too perfect to be discriminating. To Pinckney's left was a clever-hearted woman, to his right a sweet-minded girl; the Major would have looked at the one and talked to the other; Pinckney looked and talked haphazard and ate no dinner. His mind was busy assuring his heart that it had no personal interest in the future of Miss Dorothy Somers. Then suddenly he heard her name and felt the blood mounting to his beardless cheek. Boys are very like girls; despite any difference of moral code or conduct, prudence is shared by both sexes alike; most men will blush longer than a woman will. As if one should be ashamed of caring, however lightly, for another one!

"Why does she do it?" his married neighbor had said; and it became evident that Gansevoort was regarded as quite impossible. The Major asked how old she was.

"Not twenty," said Mrs Shirley. "I remember when Dolly Riddle married Mr Somers at Newport in the sixties; nobody knew much about him;

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he was thought rich. But the daughter cannot be twenty."

"Too young," said the Major, "to have had the usual explanation—" The Major seldom forced his efforts, but this time he paused for the expected question. Every woman at the table asked it except the young girl on Pinckney's right, who opened expectant eyes.

"Another man," said Brandon, sententiously. His glance fell upon Pinckney as he spoke. But Pinckney knew it was not he. He knew well enough what the Major meant, though, and his consciousness got a lonely moment while the others were asking the oracle to be explicit.

Suddenly his pulses bounded again. Could it be—but no; he was not vain enough for that. Yet he had never asked her to marry him.

"If there wasn't a man in the past to make her do it, there ought to be a man in the present to prevent her," went on Brandon. "Where are all you young chaps? Is your blood all cooled by money-making? Ah, there was a use for the gentleman of leisure."

"Why don't you try it yourself, Major Brandon?" It was the clever lady on Pinckney's left who spoke.

"Ah, madam, I am too old for love-making——"

"I shouldn't think so," said the lady gallantly.

The Major pressed his hand to his heart. "But perhaps with me there was a long time ago. I remain true to an early dream," closed Brandon with mocking solemnity. For he had a cynic's disbelief in the world's understanding.

"You?" cried Mrs Shirley. "Girls, he was the greatest flirt I ever knew."

"My flirtations were but a mask to hide my constancy." There was a general laugh, and the conversation drifted from the danger point.

But after dinner, on the piazza above the sea-broken crags, Pinckney found the Major beside him, and they smoked together. Pinckney hoped the older man would talk of Miss Somers again; but the Major persistently didn't. On the contrary, he maintained entire silence; but the Major's silence could be suggestive. So pretty soon our hero found himself asking the Major if he knew Miss Somers.

"No," said the Major, "do you?"

"A little—is Pete Gansevoort as bad as he is represented?"

"He is very bad, very coarse, very stupid, very rich——"

"It seems a pity she can't be saved from it."

"Is she worth saving?"

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Pinckney's voice shook, ever so little. "I think so," said he. "I don't know her very well."

"Then I advise you not to trouble yourself about her."

"But—suppose one were her friend—apparently she has none near her—would it not be rather terrible not to trouble oneself? Her soul is too fine for his."

"Young man," said the Major, sententiously, "one lesson I learned in early life: never to trouble oneself about young women's souls."

III

PINCKNEY had been landed only a very few days from a summer spent in Baden, the country of his birth. He had come to New York; and there had only stopped to report at the prominent firm already alluded to and to engage himself rooms in a fashionable bachelors' flat on Fifth Avenue. All this his patrimony permitted. His father was deceased, and his three sisters had married three German barons. Then he had come right on to the North Shore. It was in the most practical state of mind that he had returned from London; he was about to enter into American civilization in good

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earnest and begin by mastering the as yet undecided intricacies of the New York code of practice. He also meant to read some law. Eclecticism is the vice of America's youth.

But, besides this, Pinckney had been brought up abroad by a father who was expatriated, side-tracked. Possibly to such the home looks fairer; at all events, the son was full of enthusiasm about America. He hoped to adorn it, with his life; but furthermore to live his life, as a citizen. His lot to work among the poor in college settlements, among the poor in spirit, in courageous action, among the poor in ideals, in the higher civic duty. Among his side motives, it is quite possible the poor boy counted the regeneration of the city government of New York, for that was to be the town of his adoption; it was the biggest place, the most typical. Yet the guidance of his country's women, still less of any one countrywoman, had never yet assailed his mind. In the American girl, as Pinckney believed, there was no flaw. She was no part of his problem. But the streamlet flows where the land falls.

Coming out before breakfast, next morning, he met one of the most charming of them; she was climbing on the cliffs that fringed the lawn, holding on to the overhanging birch trees, and the sea made a raucous noise at her feet. When they came

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back to breakfast, he asked his cousin if it was *de rigueur* for them to go to church. But the Shirleys were good old Boston Unitarians, and his cousin seemed rather puzzled at the question. A Boston Unitarian only finds out at his funeral what church he does attend. "The church is at Beverly," she said. "You may go if you like; I think there will be room. The break will start at ten."

The break started without Austin, or his companion, who was his young dinner neighbor of the night before. They walked along the cliffs to the beach, and then along the beach to Manchester, where Pinckney managed to hire a dory to row home. Fortunately, the day was still, and the young lady was in russet shoes and short skirt. Pinckney liked the young lady very much; but he did not ask her how much she liked him. Mrs Shirley seemed rather pleased at their being late to luncheon, and suggested they should go to drive in the buckboard for the afternoon. Pinckney was already too much of an American to be misled by the national temper of kindly approval of the companionship of young people; but it is a dangerous thing to talk long to one young girl when thinking of one other. The boy found himself in a gentle mood that evening. He half regretted not sending that letter. After dinner he had little mind for the men's talk, but a

certain inbred sense of conduct bade him avoid the young girl. So pretty soon he joined his cousin and her married friend on the dark piazza, where the sea was making reminiscent noises.

"I assure you that it is all the mother's doing," the friend was saying. "She writes me that she is constantly with her, but the poor girl is crying night and day."

Our hero promptly sheered off, crossing the lawn; under the shadow of some cedars he lit a cigar; and then went down the cliffs and wandered on the strip of shingle, as he thought, to think. But the sea, or anything eternal, is a most dangerous companion at such times; entering into our emotions with a relation quite temporary and personal. Only persons without imagination call the ocean or the night sky of stars or the void prairies unsympathetic at such moments. To us others it seems to say: We are indeed eternal, but our courses are fixed; you may really will something. We have no passions; but you can act. We feel with you; and you are right in feeling as you do. Generally, this converse with inanimate nature impels to animate action.

And then, the young man didn't sleep; or not for some hours. Visioned in the darkness was the image of a lovely girl, crying in her room, alone.

There is something reassuring in the voice of

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birds, even after the most unquiet night; and the moment they began to sing, outside amid the fruit trees, Pinckney fell asleep. He woke with a start, at breakfast time; and hurrying downstairs, he had another start as he went through the hall. For there on the table, amid all the less momentous letters, lay one whose postmark the young man divined before he snatched it up to look at it; it was Philadelphia, and the handwriting he knew; and he blushed as he thrust it hastily into his pocket. Fortunately, it was his left hand, so that his right was free to shake his cousin's; his other hand still grasped the letter tightly as if it were needful to hold it down.

There was no chance to look at it before he sat down to breakfast, and he wondered how she could have learned his address. "No sugar, please," he said to Mrs Shirley for the second time. After all, it was probably a mere note, announcing her engagement, written to him with fifty other friends. At last, the meal was over; he ran up to his bedroom and broke the seal—it was addressed to him at Mrs Shirley's:

"PHILADELPHIA, September 2, 1884.

"DEAR MR PINCKNEY:

"Have you heard of my engagement to Mr Gansevoort? I know you have returned, and though you have not come to congratulate me, I am still

"Yours, DOROTHY SOMERS."

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There was the faintest possible dash before the word "congratulate"; otherwise the note was a natural enough note, he argued, if written to an old friend. It was odd she had used the form of signature adopted for the note he had torn up, and the "still" might mean anything. Nonsense, it referred to the "though" before it.

As he folded it and replaced it carefully in his pocket, he noticed that his heart was beating violently.

IV

A MAN need love a woman very little before he begins to think that he alone can make her happy," said the Major impressively. It was the middle of the same morning; Youth and Age were lying on the grass together; and Youth, in form supposititious, had been laying before Age something of his own case. "She'll do very well."

"I don't think I alone can make her happy," said Youth. "I have no intention of trying. But I can't avoid going to see her."

Age paused, before replying, to listen to the long smooth slide of the pebbles in the chasm below.

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"You live in New York, she in Philadelphia; there is an excuse in ninety miles. She can hardly telephone you—that distance——"

"Her note requires some answer——"

"It needn't be personal."

"Look at it," cried Youth impulsively, thrusting the document in the hand of Age. The Major fingered it as if it were a bomb.

"Please read it," said Pinckney.

The Major unfolded the note slowly, held it between his thumb and finger, and carefully adjusted his eyeglasses. He paused some moments over the signature. "Dorothy Somers—pretty name," said he. "The note is a masterpiece of concise English. Did you know her as well as this before she became engaged to young Gansevoort?"

"As well as what? She wrote fifty such notes, I suppose——"

"Then why does it require a personal answer?"

Pinckney colored. "Well, no, I didn't."

"Hm," said the Major, and looked out to sea where an ocean tug was towing a train of coal barges. "Why can't they hitch on to one man without towing another in their wake? It doesn't appear," he concluded, handing the letter back to Pinckney, "whether she wants your congratulations or your condolences."

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“Condolences, very likely,” said Pinckney with a laugh.

The Major’s face darkened. “You must remember, there’s but one way to console a woman for her emotional misfortunes— You have decided to go to-night?”

“I’ve got to go to New York to-night, anyhow——”

“And to Philadelphia to-morrow.”

“I’ll think it over.”

“My goodness, don’t do anything of the sort,” cried the Major in alarm. “Don’t think anything at all about it. And don’t go to Philadelphia. Go to Plunder’s and send her twenty dollars’ worth of flowers, with a pretty letter. Regard no expense at critical moments. And in a letter you can say what you like.” .

The Major waited, and both were silent, looking over a radiant, almost luminous sea: not a shadow but of bright color lay in the day, and the whitecaps dazzled where the ultramarine broke. Over such a sea sailed Tristan, bound from Ireland, or Helen, bound for Troy. The Major seemed to hope that his young friend would reply, but Pinckney was silent.

“In a letter you may say what you like,” the Major repeated, and then, “She won’t show it to

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her husband," he added. The addition was a mistake. Pinckney started up.

"Take another cigar," said the Major. "To try Man, the Lord created Woman—but then, relenting, gave him tobacco and rum that he might bear her ways." But the young man shook his head and ran into the house.

V

AT dinner the Major ascribed Pinckney's departure to a sudden political engagement in New York. "This nomination of Blaine means much to a young man with a fresh eye. He has proclaimed himself a Democrat and gone on to work for Mr Bayard. It makes little difference in the end. Every party in power develops its own rump." Thus pleasantly did old Brandon divert the minds of his hearers and screen his young hero from the ridicule which in America attaches to the man whose actions are ever swayed by his emotions.

But the cries of the longshoremen on a New York pier woke Pinckney the following morning. He drove to his—so temporary—bachelor rooms for breakfast and a change of raiment, called at a florist's, and took the noon train for Philadelphia.

That city was wrapped in slumberous heat. Our

hero walked, desirous of arriving quietly. A cab rolls to the door, creates a certain excitement! The neighbors look out, the servant is impressed; you leave a card, and that is definitive. But arriving quietly on foot, if the lady be out, it is easy to say you will come again in an hour or so. Perhaps, then, the lady will be in. Or, if she be not (and the butler knows his business), you may as well stay away for good; in either case, your mind is relieved.

And Pinckney was determined to relieve his mind. He had no idea of not seeing Miss Somers. He knew she was at home in her own house—probably preparing the wedding trousseau. If there were to be a sacrifice it should at least be a voluntary one, made of her own free will. (Heaven knows what picture he had in his mind of a fair girl weeping in an upper chamber while the piles of cartons, of laces and *chiffons*, accumulated at the front door.) However, it was an unconscious picture; Pinckney thought he was looking at the quaint little red-brick houses, wooden-shuttered, marble-rimmed, with the toy white marble stoops; these houses were all hermetically sealed; the tinkle of the horse-car on its single track sounded lonely on the narrow street. He felt glad that all the world was away. Though, on the surface, it was to be a call of congratulation, Pinckney was subtly

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not completely unconscious that it conveyed, alternatively, the invitation to lead the higher life. Consciously, he was quite sure—almost as sure as he had been with the Major—that it proffered no such romantic alternative. But not to come would have been delinquent, if there were any—if on the chance—Pinckney took his thoughts by the neck and shoulders and placed them back on the track. To send merely flowers had been a cold acceptance of a situation which, after all, given such acquiescence, might some time, in some future spiritual state, be in part his fault.

The sound of the doorbell startled him. As it reverberated through an empty house, it seemed to advertise his coming throughout all the street. The house was more pretentious than its neighbors and presented edgewise a higher, narrow front of brown stone; behind the twenty-foot *façade* it was tunnel-shaped and ran back indefinitely. This Pinckney well knew, and after a proper delay he heard the butler's steps echoing along the wooden-paved hall. "Not at home." Of course not. "Give her this card—perhaps I can call again in an hour." To send up his card, then, was practically to insist; he did not wish to force his visit; the delay gave her at least the option. So his thoughts repeated themselves; and he went and sat, like any other loafer,

in the little park near by. This was empty, even of nursemaids and children; in their stead were strange visitants, barbarians, to whose incursions it lay open in the summer months. He sat down and waited.

The hour passed by slowly. In front of him was a club, with awnings at the open windows. It seemed empty; but Pinckney had no desire to be seen by any possible acquaintance, and he changed his seat. The hour lagged interminably; he counted the people in the square; then he counted the negroes among them. He tried to collect his thoughts; he had none. He only felt that he should keep this episode in his life unknown, and as a gentleman passed by with clothes of a familiar cut, he decided that this place was too public. Four blocks south, one east, and then returning, should make a mile; in that heat it might dispose of twenty minutes. But when this evolution was performed the chimes struck only the half-hour. Yet he felt a sort of duty in keeping the date exact; his half of the tryst should be performed punctiliously. He was building a clear conscience for his after life.

When at last he stood before the door the house seemed as lonely as he had left it. The thought then first crossed his mind that a denial would hardly be noncommittal. Would it not perhaps imply a

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reason that they should not meet? Again he heard the butler's ringing step—what a singular messenger of fate! “Miss Somers will receive you, sir,” he said; Pinckney fancied, with a shade more intention than an ordinary call required. He hated to feel himself blush before the butler; and he entered the dark drawing-room too conscious that his emotions lay but throat-deep.

But Pinckney, at his first glance, blushed again for his fatuity. Dorothy (he had called her Dorothy) might already have been Mrs Petrus Gansevoort for the aplomb with which she received him. And suddenly he felt himself at a loss to justify his call.

“I—I only landed from Europe last week,” he began. (*Banal*—and she knew it already.) “I—I have come to congratulate you upon your engagement.”

“Yes—I am so much obliged to you for the flowers you sent. We are to be married next month. Mr Gansevoort desires it, and mama—does not believe in long engagements.”

She indicated, with a turn of her hand, the flowers on a table beside her. He saw then that there were many others. His modesty now ran to the other extreme and pictured him but one of an indistinguished multitude. Why should he call more

than the rest? Perhaps they had called, and she was used to it.

"Is your mother well?" He felt himself a boy again, for saying it.

"Oh, mama is quite well." A slight note of impatience arrested his attention, and for the first time he looked at her. And then, perhaps, the man in him was conscious of a thrill. For no man can so look on a woman without it. She had but the usual ivory pallor of her unusual beauty. True, there were dark rings under the strange eyes—there often were, when she looked her best—those strange eyes that seemed to drink in all the light and give out none. Yet, for the first time, it struck him how young she was; there was a something shrinking about the girlish frame she carried so well; as he looked she met his eyes for half an instant, then sank upon a sofa.

"I'm so sorry you cannot meet—Mr Gansevoort. His business called him West for a few days."

"I am sorry," said Pinckney grimly. There was something about this perfect acceptance of the situation to make him a trifle angry. He changed his cane from his right hand to his left. After all, he was ready to go.

"But please sit down," said Miss Somers.



"He bent over her, waiting."

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After all—he could hardly go yet. She seemed taller sitting; her fine white gown fell in maturer folds, above which the deep bronze of her hair was lost in the shadows of the room. Then he looked at her, steadily. After all, he was not in love with her—definitely. Yet he wondered if she remembered. It was not for him to remind her.

“Did you have a pleasant summer?”

“Very,” said Pinckney dryly. “I think I must be going—my train leaves at five. I only ran down to—” He left the sentence unfinished, surprised at the slightest possible click in his throat. He hoped at least she had not heard it—absurd as it was. He rose hurriedly. But she did not get up. He extended his hand. She did not grasp it. Slowly her shoulders sank to the arm of the ottoman; she was breathing rapidly. She leaned her head upon her hand.

His face burned. Her other arm lay nerveless on her lap. With an effort he did not grasp it. “Good-by,” said he.

Then he saw that the slender frame was shaken with sobs. “Miss Somers—Dorothy!”

There was no reply, but she was clearly crying. Her white wrist was burning hot. Slowly, slowly he bent over her, waiting; lower, lower. She turned her face. Their lips met.

VI

WHAT was the last thing she said to you?"

It was the Major who spoke, after a long pause. It was two o'clock in the morning by this time, at the Major's club in New York, where Pinckney had met him just before midnight. The meeting was not by appointment, but Pinckney had found him there, the Major having returned from Beverly by the day train. The Major had a habit of turning up where he was wanted. He said the Beverly house was stupid after his young friend's departure. A champagne glass stood at his elbow, empty; another stood at Pinckney's, full.

"The last thing she said to me was 'Go.'"

"Which is as much as to say 'Come.'"

"I shall go back to-day," said the young man. "Do you think she will break the engagement formally?"

"It strikes me you have broken it yourself. You should save her further trouble——"

"By seeing him?"

"By managing her."

"Her mother will never consent——"

"We won't consult the old lady. I'll give her away myself." The Major's face was radiant.

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"I'll see you through." Pinckney's eyes flashed, but about his lips lay also a curve of determination.

"I must see her first."

"Certainly. But I'll see everybody else. Parson, clerk, reporters—and Gansevoort, 'too, if he wants it. I'll give them all satisfaction." The Major looked ten years younger as he spoke.

"It must be in a church——"

"Certainly. And I'll have my sister there——"

Pinckney grasped his hand. "I can't say it, but you know what I feel."

"Don't try to say it. Of course I do! Why, it's like being married myself! The one experience I've never had—everything comes to him who waits. I know just how you feel. I'm dead in love myself. Don't try to say it to me—tell her, though." And the Major poured out a glass of wine.

Pinckney thought to let pass his pretended misunderstanding of his gratitude—obviously pretended, for the Major's eyes were moist. He sprang up.

"It's three o'clock. I must take the train at six at Jersey City. I'll have a bath first—I must take the train, though. I must see Miss Somers the first thing in the morning."

"Of course you must. I'll go with you—telegraph my sister to come on later."

“We must be married to-morrow.”

“Nonsense. To-day, man, to-day. You should remember that you have placed Miss Somers in an impossible situation. Not a moment should be lost in regularizing it. As for Mr Gansevoort—he may come back sooner than he said—almost at any moment. Then think of the poor girl’s position—getting notes or telegrams from him every two hours, I suppose—knowing all the time what she means to do.”

But Pinckney required no argument. “Of course, if it can be done.”

“Certainly, it can be done—if you don’t mind being married in the afternoon. I’ll be your best man, and my sister her bridesmaid—her sister is too young to be told—otherwise I’d tell her. You can usually trust a girl to take the proper view. Brothers are unsafe. Fortunately she hasn’t any. And I’ll telegraph a High-Church clergyman I know—Father Conynghame, a real good fellow who believes that marriage is a sacrament and the civil law an impertinence—and I’ll get a judge—and a bishop——”

Pinckney looked up interrogatively.

“Of course you must have a bishop. My dear fellow, you must pardon me, but in view of the—somewhat sudden engagement between you and the

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lady and the—improbability—of there being many invited guests, it is advisable that the wedding should be celebrated with all possible ceremony.”

“But without the mother’s consent?”

“I’ll give the bishop a hint that the mother *can’t* consent. Trust me for that—and a good High Churchman to take the catholic view. It’s divorcing they jib at, not marrying.”

“When will you tell her?”

“Well,” said the Major, “I’ll do that after dinner.” And this time he drank his wine.

The events of that day passed over our hero like a dream. His emotions were too much roused to leave to his mind much contemplation of the actual facts. But the facts succeeded each other with a decision and rapidity that would else have taken his breath away. And through them all he was conscious of the ever-present activity of his best man. It was under his advice that he telegraphed Miss Somers that he was returning to Philadelphia and would call in the course of that morning, also giving his address at a certain hotel. “She may prefer the meeting elsewhere than at home; we must disregard trifling conventions.” Under his advice steps were taken to borrow his aunt’s house in Lenox. “A trip to Europe would be a common performance; we must avoid all that looks sudden or unpre-

meditated, as well as any appearance of concealment. At Lenox you may have solitude and yet be in Society." The Major spoke sententiously, as became one who spake whereof he knew. All our hero did was to obtain a stay of all these proceedings until he had seen Miss Somers—a decision the propriety of which the Major did not question, though he considered it unnecessary. His confidence in her love for his young friend would have been touching to a bystander; there came a time when it touched Pinckney himself. "She will never marry *him* now," he said. "If she does, you don't want to marry *her*."

But the Major himself was to be given a lesson in good breeding on this occasion. The hours passed long upon the railway and yet Pinckney could have wished they had been longer. So to every young man, at the moment of plighting his troth to a young lady, I suppose—certainly to every one on the verge of marriage—there comes a moment, not of revolution, but of acute perception. Besides the intoxication of having another life with yours, the rapturous modesty of undeserved consecration to intimacy with a more sacred being, the glamour that the mystery of Sex throws over purity—and Pinckney was both pure and modest—there must flash with all the aggregate definiteness of a camera obscura upon the

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mind the visions of all things present and to come, in the path chosen or beside it. He had no concern about his own happiness: the witchery of Sex is always at his age strong enough to reassure upon that point. But he felt, as her mother would say, "all that she was giving up." It was true, she had chosen for the ideal life, and that this choice must always be well. But was he strong enough to give it to her? The fact, so obvious to the Major, that she was simply in love with him, lay well in the background. And on coming to the hotel the first thing he asked for and found was a note from Miss Somers. It had been brought by a messenger in the ordinary way, and was as follows:

"I have received your telegram, and shall be at home at eleven this morning.

"DOROTHY."

The Major walked with him to the house and waited outside with a sheaf of his telegrams in leash.

VII

HOW can biography be an exact science? Who knows enough of anybody else, who is not a Frenchman, or a Russian girl, to write the life of him? Is a man's life (a woman is more cognizant)

known even to himself? Shall not we, all but the Puritans, go to the last trump as uncertain of the Judgment as of a woman's favor? Yet a man knows the events, the acts and sayings of his career, though rarely the motives which influenced them, his own or those of others; his own acts which result come to him frequently enough with surprise. He sees himself do it as he sits on his horse and sees it take a fence.

The imaginary biographer is supposed to know it all; and yet the conventions of English fiction are against his telling it. Under this rule the epochal moments of a man's life are nearly all untellable. The touch of the hot face, the kiss given in a passion of tears, determined their lives; yet my gentlest reader may not yet have forgiven to me her knowledge of it,—though Major Brandon had grasped the fact without an intimation.

Pinckney's memory always was that he went into the house that morning with a matured mind, the Major's plans all at his finger ends, the course of action (if any was to be taken) coldly blocked out. First, it was for her to decide; despite all his love, he would not urge. If she wished, the kiss should be as if it never had happened. But Miss Somers came to the door herself; and before they had entered the dark drawing-room her figure was clasped

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closely and her lips drawn up to his. So much must be told the reader; for the reader must know all. What the Major learned was only this: That she had simply told her mother that she wished to be in alone to see him, Pinckney, and then had sent the butler on an errand and dispensed with the maid's attendance. It appeared that she had even mentioned, to her mother, his name. Daisy was at school. Except for just the things that Austin did not mention (and which perhaps the Major's imagination supplied), her conduct was that of the ideal *grande dame*, which the Major roundly declared her to be. She chose to see him in her own house. She consented to the marriage taking place that very afternoon; she had even considered the question of informing her mother of her plans upon her mother's return from shopping. (At that the Major gave a bound.) She had only concluded not to do so in consideration of her mother's peace of mind. As she, Miss Somers, had quite determined to carry it through, it might be best to do it as quietly as possible; and, for quiet, Mrs Somers could not, upon such short notice, be counted on. She would wish at least for delay, she might want to telegraph to Mr Gansevoort; in short, Miss Somers was quite convinced that her mother's peace of mind would be best preserved by hearing of it first as a fact accomplished and to which she was

not accomplice. She must then be told, of course, at once.

“I’ll tell her myself—I’ll do it to-night,” said the Major enthusiastically.

The Major had fought a duel in his day.

Then, went on Pinckney, she had called down the stairs Miss Winifred Radnor and presented him to her (whom, indeed, he had slightly known before) somewhat in these words (Miss Radnor had been there looking at the wedding presents): “Winnie, I am going to be married to Mr Pinckney this afternoon, and I want you to be my bridesmaid.”

(“Splendid!” ejaculated the Major.)

Miss Radnor had shown considerable excitement not unmingled with opposition; but as she had been Dorothy’s most intimate friend, nearer than her mother to the secrets of her heart, it had been surmounted. It was all arranged, and they were to call with a carriage for the young ladies at six o’clock.

“At Miss Somers’?” said the Major.

“At Miss Radnor’s.”

The Major was off with his bundle of telegrams.

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VIII

THEN Austin went back to the hotel to write his letters. They were to be given to the Major, after the ceremony, to be posted by him, and were addressed, first, to his three married sisters in Germany, the Baroness von Schröder of Wurtemberg, Grafin Marie von Stoltzfeld, at Hanover, and Madame von Pauli, the wife of an Austrian general. He wrote, of course, to his old Aunt Emily who had the Lenox house. ("I know her very well," the Major said. It was a thing he said of all nice old women, were it London or New York.) And he also wrote to Mrs Arthur Shirley.

At two the Major returned and insisted on their dining: green turtle and champagne he ordered, of which latter he seemed in little need. The Major looked twenty years younger. It seemed as if the heart hunger of a lifetime were being filled. "It's all right," he said; "I've seen everybody—Father Conynghame attends to the church, the judge'll have the papers ready; I've ordered the flowers, got the bishop and the railway seats; my sister'll meet us in Camden at the station, and I've invited both the Associated Press correspondents and two or three fellows from the club to dinner. I've just been to see

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Miss Radnor, and I've promised to bring her home by seven. She says it's splendid. Then I'll go and see Mrs Somers and be ready to receive my guests at the club at eight. In fact I've asked several fellows at the club to meet us, and two, that I could trust, to be ushers. It's all right," he concluded, to Austin's start of surprise; "they only know your name as yet; it's as sacred as a duel. Now you go out and pass the time in getting a ring."

Pinckney afterward believed he would have forgotten that. "Go to Caldwell's and mention my name." It was lucky Major Brandon mentioned this also. For our hero, thinking that economy would best begin with their home, purchased not only a wedding ring but a string of pearls. The stones were not so large as in the triple rope that Gansevoort had sent her—now to be returned—but still it was a string of pearls, and as such represented about half a year's income. For it he gave his check—and the Major's reference—and put the two caskets in his pocket. It was, of course, unsafe to send anything to the house. He had a horror of taking anything from the house. By an old rule of law a man who wed his wife "in her shift" took her free of all her previous debts. It was only Dorothy he wanted; their evasion (the Major vigorously denied that it was an elopement), their sudden mar-

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riage was justifiable only on the necessary ground of pure emotion. All dross of earth his bride should leave behind her; he took just her—barely equipped with her girlish belongings, free of past emotional obligations. Nothing that appertained to her much-advertised engagement, not even the trousseau given by her mother, was to come.

The hour approached; it now was. Pinckney was feverishly anxious; the Major was in no hurry, calm with Napoleonic consciousness of battle planned—how completely planned, it did not dawn upon its hero for some days afterward. Their carriage, a modest hackney, stopped at the street corner; the Major issued, to return forthwith with the two young ladies. No baggage was loaded except a pasteboard box which the Major opened on the ferryboat; it contained two bouquets of roses and four buttonhole gardenias, each of which was affixed by a pearl scarfpin. At one of the bouquets was pinned a locket of small pearls; at the other (the bride's) a cluster of five pearls to make the centre of Austin's necklace. Had Pinckney known it, the centre stone was finer than any of the Gansevoort string. It is possible that the Major for the moment was the happiest person of the four. Generally speaking, at a wedding, the groom drives to the church with the best man, the bride with him who

is to give her away; afterwards the bride and groom drive away together. The Major (who has, however, tried but two of these three places) has assured me that the second is the best. But he had feared the processional effect of two carriages in Camden, and they were all together. The bride was undemonstratively, Austin joyfully, Miss Radnor excitedly, silent. Only the Major talked.

It was dusk when they landed and drove to Judge Gallison's office. Here the two principals had to comply with the unexactings formalities of Jersey law. Austin always remembered the large office or Judge's chambers, considerably dark, with only the very oldest and red-tapest of clerks; the jovial judicial magnate, himself in wedding garb, who began by congratulating them on what they were about to do, who afterward, in a separate carriage (into which he was careful to invite the two young ladies), accompanied them to the church ceremony. "I am to give her away, you know—knew her father all his life"—Judge Gallison had never before heard of the gentleman alluded to—leaving the Major, a little crestfallen, to go alone with the bridegroom.

However, the drive was none too short for the Major to give to Austin his directions. They were to go, of all places, to Atlantic City that night ("If you can't have real solitude, the next best

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thing is a vulgar crowd—they'd look at you at Newport, but they see too many weddings at Atlantic City"), whither the luggage had already been expressed. ("To-morrow's newspapers will be down with the right story, but before they find you, you'll be off to Lenox.") They would find their rooms all ready at the best large hotel, under the names of Mr and Mrs Pinckney. ("Would be a great error to show any attempt at concealment—fortunately, your name is quite unknown in Philadelphia.") On the morrow, a competent lady's maid would arrive.

The carriage stopped at the church. The bride's party had already entered; but in the vestibule Austin was introduced to a dear young Quaker lady of sixty as the Major's sister; then to two elegant young gentlemen already vested in the usher's pin. "Mr Riddle, Austin, of Philadelphia; Mr Schermerhorn of New York, I think you know." Austin did know him as a personage whose presence lent social sanction to almost anything and—now he remembered it—one who had figured rather prominently in a club dispute with Petrus Gansevoort. (Had he known it, Dallas Riddle also, a beau of rising forty, had offered himself to Miss Somers at a last winter's ball.)

"The Bishop of Appalachia—" Austin bowed deeply to a benevolent, well-nurtured High Church-

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man—the metropolitan of Philadelphia was, at that period, Low. “Father Conynghame” — Austin grasped the hand of an emaciated enthusiast, with a gaunt face and a burning eye. The peal of an organ then startled him, and his best man hurried him to the chancel door.

The Major hurried him on with no time for reflection. One never does reflect on these momentous occasions. With the two ushers before them, the Major led him out amid the first triplets of Mendelssohn and a mighty rustling caused by the rising congregation.

To our hero’s amazement, the church was full of people. It was done as if prearranged. The Major afterward admitted (to the Judge) that “the house” was “paper.” And then, when all was over, when the carriages had all left, the Major drove back alone to meet Mrs Somers.

IX

A CLEVER Yankee girl once averted compassion for marrying and going to live in a remote Western town by remarking that the first year she would be too much in love to care where they were, and in a second year she should be used

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to anywhere. Austin never again went to Atlantic City. The long board walk, lined with cheap raree-shows, the flat and noisy ocean, passed like an unheeded panorama upon his world of will. Schopenhauer, having none, gives no marvelous analysis to the subjective state of humor; but though they had two long board walks together, emotion overshadowed even Austin's humorous apperception; and his bride had none.

The novelist who would write of the day after the marriage must shed ink like a cuttle-fish: so a Browning could envelop the theme in inky metre, a Meredith in turgid prose. English letters scream at life's essentials. The Frenchman's hero is self-conscious even in his caresses, to such as he passion is never pure; to an American it is; but just for that your Frenchman makes an art of love. Innocence shrinks at non-essentials, body is undemonstrable, while the blushing face is unveiled to your scrutiny. The Mohammedan veils the face only; to the real master of sensuousness, personality, not person, is the ultimate. Our Puritan inversion reverses the nature of things, deifies the body by withholding simple knowledge of it, overemphasizes it, ignores the soul. The bourgeois customs emphasize the physical surrender which, more innocently, had been a forgotten episode. The Greeks revered the

human form and were not troubled by it; the higher lover's progress should be from body to the soul. It is a vulgarity that accentuates a situation that should be natural, gradual, holy (for the normal of the world is holy, else are we apes, indeed)—holy as the opening of flowers. So the first day of honeymoon may be one of stormy doubt, of shock and question. This tradition hath monkish coarseness bequeathed to protestant prudery. Since Daphnis and Chloe became sinful to our monkish modes, there is no chance for better, save for the satyr—a thing the sensualist has learned to profit by; it is your rake who manages susceptibilities, reconciles to Sex; most signally if any be after all of temperament to be won this way,—a thought, as the poet said, to show one shapes of night at loftiest noon. Your gentleman, Parsifal-pure, at best may have his chance to hold, by very contrast, the young Faustine; he may fail with Seraphita. For Parsifal, no pity knowing, hath killed the swan, Parsifal the pure; to a Tristan, wedding matters little; and they—kissed first. It was this kiss shrived them. Or how is the great circle better? Burning in the calm that warns of storm, a painted ship upon a painted ocean; an ancient mariner's chart to young lovers, the alternative is impossible. When Tristan sailed Iseult from Ireland, his course was straight.

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No fears for either till the kiss had come; but will it last a lifetime? Then is there no sin. But who can tell? theirs lasted well till death. Dorothy had had our hero's kiss; no chalice'd potion could have been more potent, no Brangæna certainer to turn the world.

But now that day, that doubting day, had passed. Happiness now—the Bird with oily breast sleeps, for our Tristan, on the wave of Tintagel. Yes, happiness now. The halcyon morn is early to be so fine—no mists upon the mountain tops, the warm sun bright at the heart. The cobwebs at one's feet are swept away; they never were; no thought for the morrow, not even for the evening. The stormy unrest was short; that agony of joy, troubling to the memory, soon forgotten; the shock of daylight soon strengthens the eyes, softens the light to steady calm. A day of doubt, a night of journey—and it is the dreamy Berkshire hills, the wholesome swelling of the earth, the gold witch-hazel's guerdon of the coming spring, the leafage scarlet with fruition, the brown earth plowed for future harvest, and God is with the World.

X

THE morning lay over the Lenox valley. A week had gone by since their wedding. Austin and Dorothy were in the house their kindly aunt had left for them; and just as the sun rose above the eastern woods our hero came out upon the lawn and ran, like a boy, down the steep-shaven slope. But the face was a man's: the Major, had he seen it then, would have noticed a change. With all the brightness of youth his lips had the firmness, his eyes had now the repose, of man's estate. No longer questioning of the world, no more self-conscious than the West Wind, he ran for very joy of life, chasing the squirrels, scattering the red apples, conscious unconsciously of all happiness and loveliness, hardly more so than the bee that left the tall foxglove at his feet and buzzed into the brown sunlight, golden with the pollen. The secret of the world was his; he was wise with the wisdom that should never be lost, forgotten by the middle years, envied by the elders. But a moment he played about; then, as a shutter opened in the house, he made for it, as the bee for its hive. For his wife, from the open window, called to him. In a moment she was at his side.

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They joined hands and raced down the hill. In her muslin morning gown, clinging to her young figure, she yet ran like an Atalanta. Dorothy, too, was changed, and for the better; a warm flush was in the ivory-white face, the cheek was fuller, the eyes two very wells of velvet black. Almost a typical American beauty, there was something Spanish in the type, not unusual with us. The morning was warm enough for them to sit in a garden seat beneath the golden beech leaves. "Dorothy," said he (his arm was at her waist), "Dorothy" (he said it like a prayer), "I've a letter from Major Brandon, dear old fellow!"

"A letter? Oh, let me see it——"

"A letter and a package of newspapers."

Dorothy clapped her hands. "Oh, what do they say? I have been so afraid what they might say of us—what do people think of me?" She had never spoken to him before of this anxiety, and the thought crossed his mind then that it had been nice of her. They knew that the Major had fulfilled his promise and seen Mrs Somers; for from that lady they had had a letter. But with newspapers they had not yet been troubled.

"Let's read the letter first," said Austin.

It was very short and satisfactory. "I have seen Mrs Somers again," the Major wrote, "and

she agrees with me that she should come to you at once. I cannot honestly tell you that she is yet reconciled to the match; but she will play her part, at least in public; she requires a little schooling. So you may expect her on to-morrow's train. She seems to expect that you are living in a tent, or a cave, and is waiting until her maid returns. It might be well to receive her with some display. Yours always," etc.

Austin laughed. "I'll send Wallace with my aunt's best horses." He went on, reading: "'P.S. —Mrs Pinckney had better meet her alone, at first, and let her have her cry out.' Humph!"

But Dorothy only laughed. "Let's see the papers." There was quite a bundle of them, New York and Philadelphia, and all carefully marked by the Major. Their comments reflected credit at once upon his imagination and his tact. After all the one quality depends subtly on the other. The Major's dinner to the two influential correspondents had evidently done its work. From all accounts of the wedding, you would have inferred rather the keeping of an old promise than the breaking of a new. "Miss Dorothy Somers, whose engagement to Mr Gansevoort, of New York, had been recently reported, was married to-day" (the more lively journals had it, "with much *éclat*") "to Charles

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Austin Pinckney, a young lawyer of New York. It is believed to have been quite a romance; the bridegroom made the young lady's acquaintance some years since in Germany. A tacit engagement was contracted between them at that time, and the rumor of his fiancée's engagement to Mr Gansevoort coming to him at a time when domestic duties required his presence in Germany (Mr Pinckney's father will be remembered as our late Consul in Carlsruhe), it might well have discouraged our hopes of a less earnest suitor. Mr Pinckney, however, took one of the first steamers for America, where all was happily explained." It will be seen that in this explanation Mr Gansevoort's situation was, with delicacy, left out entirely. Several of the papers entitled it, "Romance in High Life"; one even went so far as to caption it, "True to Her First Love." A New York society journal of a literary tendency made a story of it, "Hearts against Diamonds." The Gansevoort tiara was famous. But the graver journals preferred the form, "Miss Dorothy Somers, whose engagement to Mr. Petrus Gansevoort was recently canceled, was married yesterday, from her home in Philadelphia, at Trinity Church, Camden, New Jersey, by the Bishop of Appalachia, assisted by the Rev. Father Conynghame, in the presence of a brilliant com-

pany," etc., etc. "Major Gervaise Brandon,"—it was because the Major's name was Gervaise that he was invariably called Tom—"of New York, was best man; the bridesmaid, Miss Winifred Radnor; the ushers, Messrs. Dallas Riddle, of Philadelphia, and Schuyler Schermerhorn, of New York. The happy couple will spend the honeymoon in the house of Miss Emily Austin, at Lenox, Mass., an aunt of the groom, before making a trip to Europe. The presents, said to be numerous and costly, were not shown——"

"A trip to Europe?"

"Would you like to go?" But Dorothy evaded the question; and nothing more, that was spoken, passed between them for the time. The day (a most glorious one) was passed in riding in the woods, and this day, by our hero, was never forgotten. Not the too melodramatic excitement of the wedding day; not the Francesca-like kiss of wooing; far less the delirium of the twenty-four hours following the wedding (what man ever remembers them?) had half the memorable quality, a tithe of the pure human bliss, that gilded those life-climax making hours in the brown mountain woods. Whether it was that his anxieties were lulled, his fears that he had embroiled Dorothy with her family set at rest, or whether the peace of the usual human

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relation stilled his soul; or whether his heart was subtly conscious that his rash experiment had really brought the woman love—this girl who cantered by his side, her hair unbound for his pleasure and covering his eyes with warm night as he leaned from his horse to kiss her parted lips. The world was right, their love was right; it was right that he should be the father of her child. The horses seemed to feel it too: it was strange how his own, a spirited over-fed thoroughbred, insufficiently exercised by his old aunt's grooms, who had pulled his forearm to a cramp as they rode apart upon the high road, so that he even dashed ahead of her and the village boys turned round to watch the runaway—when they came to the woods and none could see them, and Austin, thinking little of his horse, half dropped the curb to bend back to the girl, to call her to his side, changing reins to pass his left arm under hers, pressing her full young form, seized not the bit as he slackened, but came to a walk, close beside her quieter mare. So side by side they walked, and his kisses fell almost as thick upon her as the dropping leaves.

They stopped in some country village, far over the mountain in New York, for food or to rest the horses; but shunning the village inns themselves, they walked by a mountain stream which made black

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pools and silvery plunges beneath the scarlet maple and yellow chestnut and birch. They rode home slower, in the afternoon with tired horses; only as the sun sank beyond Yokum's Seat did their horses' hoofs ring slowly on the pavement of the stable-yard. Then their day of love ended and they must face the world.

The world, for the moment, was personified in Mrs Somers, and at five o'clock Dorothy, in the finest carriage in the stable, started to drive for her mother to the nearest railway station. But Dorothy was still in the highest of spirits; this young lady evidently did not hold her mother in much awe. Austin, left at home, was graver. He sat down to write his answer to the Major, before she arrived; it seemed the better taste not to have to refer, even to the Major, to the domestic experiences of his new family circle. As he wrote, he caught himself envying the easy cheerfulness with which the Major had contemplated his first interview with Mrs Somers.

That lady arrived, somewhat tearful and very tired, at half-past six, and demanded instantly to be shown to her room. Both Dorothy and Austin omitted any presentation of him to her; he had seen her several times the year before, at Baden-Baden; the son-in-law relation was at once assumed. He

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thanked her for having intelligence enough to accept it. As she allowed him to take her hand, "You must forgive me," he said, "I loved her so." Mrs Somers only remarked that the train had been very hot and she was very tired, and that her mind was disquieted as to the hour when her trunks would come. "We can easily put dinner off an hour," said Austin. It was rather a master stroke. Mrs Somers looked covertly about the house; the footman was unexceptional; he betokened full dress. "Surely you don't expect anyone to dinner to-night?" said she.

The question suggested to our hero the wish that he had thought of it; but he only replied in the negative. "We thought of asking the Van Courtlandts to-morrow; they are old friends, I believe; but no one is coming to-night."

Austin was lady's maid to his young wife that night; perhaps it was fortunate that the dinner was put off; and he made her wear all her pearls. For with his own had come later two duplicates from the Major, making a strand of three like the lost Gansevoort offering. The dinner was excellent.

"You really must go to Europe first," said Mrs Somers in the evening. "I really couldn't bear it, for a few months."

And that was all.

XI

BUT first Austin took his bride to Cambridge. The trip to Europe was impossible, for all Pinckney's ambitions were now multiplied tenfold. If it had seemed before that only the highest places in his profession were worth his life, it was tenfold more true now that his end, whatever it be, must be made worthy of her as well. He had money enough to live upon, meanwhile; and the foundation could be none too carefully laid that was to carry him to the Supreme Court of the United States, that highest of tribunals in the world—or to the Court of St. James's, if haply she should prefer. As a road to wealth, the law was not so much in his mind; indeed it was not so well-trodden a path in those days as it has since become.

They took a little wooden house on one of the shaded eminences that Cambridge dignifies with the name of hill. They kept but two servants; and while Austin was absent at his law lectures, Mrs Pinckney was kept busy with the housekeeping. Of this essential art of life she knew absolutely nothing, Mrs Somers having brought her up to know only the arts she deemed necessary to a brilliant marriage. Probably this made it all the more amusing to Doro-

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thy, who had the Southern woman's readiness at practical affairs without her laziness and tolerance of petty imperfections, and a Northern woman's understanding of the character of Yankee "help" without her tendency to "nag." Her time was sufficiently diversified with society pleasures, for their marriage had made more than a nine days' wonder; Mrs Shirley and other Boston relatives of our hero made haste to welcome her and make much of the Philadelphia beauty, who had not been tempted by the largest hoard of those New York millions whose existence Boston was already learning to resent.

Dorothy successfully resisted any inclination of her mother to visit her that winter—which was not indeed difficult, as that gay widow was busy with her balls and already preparing the *début* of the younger sister who should repair poor Dorothy's failure—promising in return a long visit for the holidays. But the Major was an honored guest; first of all to visit them, he stayed a fortnight in the spare chamber without his valet, and threw himself into the academic life and its doings in a manner which did equal honor to his head and heart. By no means an unlettered man (indeed he used to wonder what sort of old age that *jeunesse* which delights only in the strength of a horse was going to lay up for itself) he reveled in the novelty of meet-

ing authors and professors; and, if he was not quite so enthusiastic about their wives, he regarded them with the highest respect. Of many of their daughters he seemed to think that something might be made, provided they were taken young enough. But most of all he was enraptured with Dorothy herself. It was so delightful (as he told Mrs Arthur Shirley) to see a young lady growing in her home, fitting her niche so perfectly, building about her, as a bird its nest, her house and household. In such households (the Major was then known to say) lay the safety of America that was to come. He insisted that Austin should go to his lectures just the same; fortunately they came in the morning, usually before the Major was up. In the afternoon there was often daylight for a sleigh ride all together, and when Austin had a leisure evening there was the theatre in Boston; at other times he would peg away at his lecture notes, and Major Brandon would sit and smoke and watch Dorothy busy herself about household affairs. It was from this time the Major learned to assert that there was poetry in a feather duster, properly applied, daintily and deftly, its owner standing tip-toe on a chair. For Dorothy, finding the law indeed a jealous mistress, asserted her wifely interest in the house, if not in the head. The sense of possession delighted her. Though

they had but a year's lease and the house was furnished by the owner (according to stern Yankee standards), their wedding presents and what they had bought since were hers, and gave her pleasure of a sort she had never felt in the more pretentious possessions of her mother's home.

To the Major, who knew Boston almost as well as he knew London, it was a time for taking up past acquaintances. He was put down at the same old club, and met the same old people, too often with a pang caused by the too obvious, in their cases, irreparable outrage of the years. A cosmopolitan existence, after all, conduces to youth; though possibly one's toes must suffer for the more youthful face. After all, his best hours were passed at the little house in Cambridge.

Austin was acquiring an enthusiasm for John Marshall, the father of our Constitution; and the Major thoroughly approved his doing so. "There is a man!" Austin would say; "there is a career! to make a nation of one's own brains! to lead an intellectual life that was also one of the highest patriotism!" Austin swore he would pass the long vacation in writing the life of Marshall, and the Major, having learned that Marshall was a man who had become Chief Justice of the United States, applauded. (This life remains unwritten; for later,

in the summer, came the plan of taking his young wife by canoe to the rivers of Canada, and later, in the winter, came the baby.) The Major went with them to several dinners, not only in Boston but in Cambridge, dinners which delighted him, though he wished the living had been plainer. Their house was just about an arm's length from a dozen neighbors', each fronting or siding upon a neighbor's back yard (one wonders when we shall learn to be suburban in blocks, and be done with it—and so get space for real gardens, and tennis grounds between, and hang our clean linen in a common secret place). In the rear was a little garden with a walk rimmed in ancient but still-struggling box—a box that had incorrigibly put forth its leaves for pleasure through many Puritan winters: and the Major, on sunny days, would walk and smoke his cigar there, thinking of his good talk of the night before. Knowledge of the world is never at a loss with a knowledge of books, though sometimes it is the other way about; and he felt pleasantly conscious of having carried with him to the entertainment his fair share. “Call it provincial!” he wrote a friend—“why, it's one of the market-places of the world's intelligence!”—“They know the world in a far more real way than I—they know the Cabinet ministers, thinkers, fellers that are doin’

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things"—he said to Dorothy—"they live just as we do, only more sensibly—and I don't suppose we've met a man who spends more than ten thousand a year!"

Austin contracted a friendship with Wentworth, a member of his class in the law school—and brought him to the house. Wentworth adored Austin, but they used to have the fiercest arguments upon points of law. "When I mail a letter accepting your offer, have I made a contract? If so, can I telegraph you withdrawing the acceptance? If so, you are bound, and I am not bound—" "That invariably happens when you write a love letter," the Major would interpolate. "The only thing is, if she has your letters, to make sure you have her kisses!" But the Major was frowned down and turned to Dorothy, who understood him. "A woman's kisses are hostages given for her good faith." Much time was given by them to this complex question (the mailing of the letter, we mean); they conceived it would be of infinite use to them in after-life. Markoff, another student, used rather to make fun of these questions; he even doubted whether the New York courts would much concern themselves over the great distinction between contracts that were unilateral and those which were bilateral; a brilliant person, but erratic, whose

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marks rose sometimes to a hundred and then sank to the danger line. Markoff came from Iowa, but he also meant to practise in the city of New York. He never mentioned his family, though no one was antisemite at Cambridge; in reality he had been born in Iowa, though his father, Markovsky, had been a Russian Jew who had made a competency out of a Keokuk dry goods store. Markoff had left the business to his brothers and taken his share, with a liberal discount, in cash. A very few months in Chicago (it was 1882) had convinced him that a lawyer's fees came from New York; it was a greater proof of his intelligence that a very few months in a Wall Street law office had convinced him that the best avenue of approach even to New York practice—of the kind he only wanted—lay through the Harvard Law School. So there he had appeared, dropping the *sky* on the way; his type of face was too European to call himself Hamilton or Rutherford as his congeners so often do; but he gave his address New York, and dressed as a New Yorker; he had learned the art there. But Markoff cared nothing for John Marshall; he wished to be, not a jurist, but a millionaire; and he wished to spend his million young. The subtleties of the Dane Law School impressed his mind as idle casuistry, but he valued its introductions. After the Major left, he

came to the house more frequently. He never could get on with the Major.

For the Christmas vacation they went to Philadelphia; here the open reconciliation with Mrs Somers took place, and the bridal couple were produced at the more important balls. Philadelphia was charming to them. To begin with, it does not care for money, and it does care for South Carolina Pinckneys; then it secretly enjoyed Mrs Somers' disappointment; finally, they were young and handsome and the old ladies liked to see them together. The men, to Pinckney, were most friendly; and Dorothy had never been so popular; while the ushers and other men who had been bidden to the Camden wedding made a little bodyguard to see that Mrs Pinckney lacked no favors and had always a suitor waiting while she danced. For the world is a kind world to those who take it simply, after all. And they had taken it in the simplest fashion—getting wed.

XII

THE few who have really found out the delights of canoe voyaging do not boast of their good fortune. The haunts they have discovered must be told to few (and those few feminine), or, at most,

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shared with a brother canoeist. But you may know them, in May, by their look of Arcady; all day they go to and fro, busying themselves in cities with their affairs, lost daisies in their eyes. Your angler too is uneasy, but (with or without his basket) he is bent upon material gain. He is after the brooks for what he can get there; something of the coarser shine of avarice is in his eyes. But the canoe voyager has the dreamy look of one who has been kissed upon the lips by a woodland nymph and forgotten just where it happened.

For the canoe takes you "by still rivers and solitary mere, and where the water brook delivers [this avoid] its waters to the weir"; behind the villages, at their back doors, where they touch nature, and reveal their life; from town to town by the unknown way; untrodden these two centuries, with fine moss-grown streets of crowfoot and meadow rue; a silent road, for all noise of axle, wheel, or cog, voiceless of steam, but full of the voice of all things else. If you meet the natives, they take you simply: children first, then women (always the easier road to their hearts). You learn no formal front from the river, but the back-yard, the true forum of domestic activity; you learn what they eat, and wear, and what they think; you eat of their new-laid eggs and sleep (if they will let you) in their haylofts; you

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talk with Mother of the girls, with the girls of the boys, with Father, in his shirt sleeves, of the well-being of your common country, yourself not too formally clad in flannels and bare sun-burned arms.

Austin had canoed in England, in Lorraine, and in the Netherlands; New England rivers were new to him; but he sought to inspire Dorothy with a sympathy for his enthusiasm for that sweetest, most individual, most personal of sports; a yachting which depends not on millions, but on the person; which requires, not the labor and the company of a dozen hired men, but only a sound heart, a healthy body, and a full mind. It was just the thing for them that summer: to keep them alone together, yet give them the joys of travel and outdoors. He took advice, and got a canvas canoe built for him in Old-town, Maine; a seventeen-footer, roomy enough for cruising, able to carry four without baggage. In this they had their daily outing on the Charles River, watching the college eights behind the houses on Beacon Street, or pushing up the tidal stream to Watertown, where the country river trickles over the last dam to find itself at sea.

Wentworth was sometimes with them on their trips; he was a sturdy, fair-haired lad from New Hampshire, with sensitive blue eyes. One day in June they were emboldened for a Viking's voyage,

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nothing less than to paddle down the harbor on a still day and dine at Taft's. For that famous hostelry was still running; it was (as all the world then knew) upon a point near Shirley Gut, through which deep, tortuous tide channel, the story runs, a Yankee frigate once escaped a British cruiser. Outside it was the sea, with real surf upon a beach—upon this occasion he invited Markoff, as a passenger; Wentworth, an athlete and a skilled canoeist, taking the stern paddle, Dorothy on the bottom facing him, her back upon a cane rest against the thwart, while Austin, slenderer, took the bow, Markoff on the bench behind him.

They had much fun and some difficulty in getting under the many pile bridges that, spider-like, connect Boston with the mainland, railway bridges most of them, making it not too clean a job. And when they swung out, past the navy yard, by the ocean liners at East Boston, a smart short sea met them, making the light bow dance wildly. Markoff wanted to turn back, and whispered to Austin; dipping his paddle to hold the bow up, he looked around; as he did so a swash of salt water came over the side, wetting Dorothy's light gown. "Is it too much, do you think?"

"Nonsense," said Wentworth, laughing up at her as he swung the stern around in a strong curved

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stroke, "we'll do it splendidly! Shan't we, Mrs Pinckney?"

"I think it's great fun," said Dorothy; and Markoff said no more. But coming back even Wentworth suggested that she should return by train; a strong east wind had set in after sunset and the bridges were not too easy in the dark.

"I'll take her back, with Markoff."

"I'll go with you," Austin said; but Wentworth answered that was nonsense.

"He'll do well enough at bow, before the wind. You take Mrs Pinckney home." So Austin and his wife were driven in the evening along the beach to the nearest railway; their dinner had been excellent, and a large moon rose out of the unbroken sea line to the east. They laughed a little at Markoff, talked a word of praise for Wentworth, and then, happiest of all themes, of themselves.

But that same full moon brought a tide that made the others some trouble. Wentworth never said a word; but Markoff told them afterwards that they had to lie on their backs under the bridges, were nearly capsized in the dark, and that it was after midnight when they got the canoe to Cambridge. Markoff abhorred personal discomfort.

Bromidon! It is a stream, a lost river, never

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to be seen again of men. For many years Austin remembered it—I wonder if he remembers it now? He stoutly asserted always that it emptied into the Connecticut; out of which more commonplace river they were lured one late June morning by what curve of lily-fringed lower beach, by what sheen of mist or sparkle of mountain, he never could describe. Then there was a foaming rapid, below a fall, above which the peace of the river lay for many miles. The northern pastures still were a riot of the May: the yellow pollen dust lay on the water, like moss upon black marble; the lower forest glades were lit with red azalea, the pathways with wild rose, the air they breathed was laden, sweet as the breath of a young girl you would kiss, with the sweetest of all odors, the blossom of the wild grape. Bromidon!

For many miles they explored this stream, that comes down from the Delectable Mountains, in a land that has no villages and yet is too tender to be wild; humanized with old wood roads and leveled pastures and blooms that have their birth in gardens. All the hours of that day they spent there, when they should have been down the great river getting on to Windsor—or to Vernon—or to Charlestown—Austin would never tell.

They had left Cambridge ten days before, the moment the examinations were over. By still rivers

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—Charles, Concord, Assabet—they had reached the swifter Nashua; then there had been a day or two upon the Merrimac, until it began to babble over stones; then the railway had carried them to the Connecticut, down which they were supposed to be returning. But the most sweet hours are those which one loses in this world. That day was given to Bromidon. Above the meadows were the great grave pines; and above the pines came now and then the azure shoulder of some purple mountain, mellowed to a russet red where outlines struck the sun. When it sank, red and clear, they found the nearest farmhouse.

XIII

THE morning came gray and doubtful, with a blustering wind. Embarked on the great river, they had to hurry to get to Bellows Falls before the brewing storm. A strong spring flood helped them, and a northeast wind; six miles an hour are easy, done in such conditions. Dorothy was evidently out of spirits; she complained of not feeling very well. Austin hurried and made a long morning of it, digging his shoulder into the stroke; but oftener and oftener the blade of the paddle was needed in the water to steady the frail bark in a

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swirl of foam or a gust of wind that hurried down the rapid river. So they got to Bellows Falls by two o'clock, not stopping for any lunch; it was well they had it with them though, for "dinner" in the cheerless country hotel was over and they were informed that the "help" had gone out for the afternoon and they could have nothing, not even tea, until supper time at six o'clock. So they ate their canoe lunch upon a marble-topped table and Austin made some tea upon the stove.

But Dorothy did not get any better that night and Austin lay awake worrying about her. And when he did fall asleep, toward morning, he was awakened by the slightest sound from her, but to him the most terrible. Dorothy was sobbing. He sprang to kiss her, with loving solicitations.

By daylight it came out. It was not that she was tired of the trip, but—yes, she would like to go back to Cambridge. Dorothy had never been alone in her life before; the cheerless, squalid hotel, the stormy contact with nature— There is a story of a lady of society who for the first time crossing the plains in a Pullman car pinned newspapers to all the windows to keep out the prairies' vastness. They had been gone over a week and in all that time had spoken with no soul they knew. "I think I should like you better, Austin," Dorothy admitted, in an

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engaging burst of frankness, "if I saw some other people too."

They came back to Cambridge, where the canoe was housed and Dorothy's trunks refitted, and then sent to Bar Harbor. Austin barely gave a sigh at the change of plans, but took advantage of the opportunity to fill his own trunk with law books. After all, Mount Desert would be a great place to study. Dorothy went in to her dressmaker's, while he stirred the dust of the library. At least, this was what he supposed; but (it was only the second evening in Cambridge, the place was hot, and they were to leave on the day after) his wife came home with a changed face. She had complained of feeling unwell that morning, and Austin had begged her not to go to town; but she had persisted and he had desisted, apprehensive of delay caused by dressmaking difficulties and very desirous of getting her into the changed air of the Maine coast. The Cambridge air was lifeless, and the place almost as lonely as that dreadful hotel, memorable always to Austin as the place where his wife had first cried. But tonight her pallor was alarming, and he began to scold.

"O Austin, I have not been to the dressmaker's!" she cried; "I have been to Dr. Byfield's." (Dr. Byfield was the family physician, recommended by Aunt Emily Austin.) "I—I am going to have a

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baby." Then she burst into tears. Austin flew to her with his arms, and kissed her over and over again. "Darling, oh, my darling," was all he could say; but he said it many, many times, between the kisses that he smothered her with. He kissed her lips over and over again, then her brow, where the wonderful hair like burnished copper was penciled on the milk-white flesh. "Oh, I am so glad we came back from New Hampshire! Darling, you don't think it was too much for you—the river, I mean?"

Dorothy shook her head. "If only we can go to Bar Harbor just the same." The tears hung on her eyelids, and he kissed them away. Then, his lips still wet, he kissed her lips once more. His arms were tight about her waist. "Don't dear, you hurt——"

Terrified with repentance, the youth sank upon the great chair, his bride in his arms. He arranged her, comfortably and tenderly, and sank upon his knees before her. "Dorothy! Dorothy, do look at me! I am so happy!"

He drew her forward. She was in a white evening gown, half robe, half wrapper; and as she leaned forward to look at him her burning face was at his cheek. She turned it away, his lips following until they touched hers. Suddenly she returned his embrace, kissing him passionately, even as he took

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his own lips away. Then she turned and looked at herself a moment in the glass; before drawing her wrapper close across her, she lifted her elbows, clasping her hands behind her head, and studied its reflection long and earnestly. Lovingly she looked at herself; lovingly Austin looked at her.

“O Austin, it is so soon! You will not expect me to nurse it, will you?”

XIV

IN January, the next year, their child was born; and it lived a day. Its dying made a dike in Austin's nature as when volcanic lava fills a rift in granite, hardened into permanence. Strangely enough (for such things are thought to mean more for women) Dorothy's nature seemed to absorb the wound. She would not go into mourning for an unchristened child: before the winter was over she was home in Philadelphia, dancing at a ball with a figure slender as any girl's, only the ripe roundness, the full shoulder, for a girl to envy.

She was the rage that winter. Men were crazy about her. She dressed richly and yet girlishly; the women said, too much. Yet her figure was so

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childish that she might wear what another woman could not. Her loose gown might fall away as from a wood nymph or slip from one round shoulder: the line of the white chest lay straight and pure, like a child's. Artists asked to paint her: she was proud of it. She wrote Austin only of her dances, and how she enjoyed it.

Austin was thankful that she was so: the thing was over, he set his teeth and worked the harder. He did not go with her this time; it was his last year in Cambridge and he meant to take high rank. He had grown very fond of Wentworth: it was settled that they were to go to New York together and (if neither of them was so lucky as to get into a great firm) they were to go into partnership. He was happy, though, when Dorothy got back just before Lent and their teas began. Wentworth and Markoff were always present; sometimes others of the Law School men, even a professor or two; Dorothy held quite a little salon.

But one day Wentworth came to him and told him that he had decided to give up going to New York, and nothing that Austin could urge availed to make him change his decision. "He had decided that he was not fitted for the life of a great city. One should be very sure of oneself—very sure of one's own abilities, to risk it. Otherwise it were bet-

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ter contentedly to accept the leadership in some provincial town."

Austin was seriously disappointed. He was not heartbroken; though the young New Englander's friendship had become very dear to him. He begged him again and again to reconsider his determination. He reminded him how they had planned and plotted to shape their careers—almost to lead their lives together. But Wentworth was adamant. "New York was well enough for Austin—he was sure to take the leadership wherever he went; with his social connections, he could seize the highest opportunities. But he, Wentworth, he was fitted to be the plodding country lawyer."

The matter was first broached by Wentworth at the beginning of a long country walk. Still unshaken by Austin's argument, he came to dinner, and after it Austin returned to the charge in vain. When Dorothy added her persuasions to his he averted his eyes but answered in the same tenor. Possibly he infused a shade more ambition into his reasoning. "His political prospects were greater at home——"

"I see," laughed Austin. "After all, Daniel Webster began at Portsmouth"—and Wentworth joined in the laugh with obvious relief. Dorothy said nothing more; and just then Markoff entered.

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The examinations began shortly after this conversation and Wentworth hardly got to the house again. Markoff continued an assiduous visitor. He had always taken very high rank and all believed that he would do so in the finals; yet he alone seemed always to have leisure. Austin was wrapped up in his work, so much so that he hardly found time even to urge Wentworth to alter his decision; that might go until the examinations were over; for was it not rumored that certain of the great New York firms left a standing offer to receive as students one or more new-fledged Harvard LL.B.'s each year, selected in the order of their rank? And this, to Austin, meant the road to a possible partnership; to Wentworth, a paid clerkship. Such a result might change even his decision, which Austin could not but regard as based on a sort of bashfulness. He was shy, socially shy, before New York and what it represented; he could see it, even in his manner with Dorothy. But Markoff found time to spend half his evenings with them; even, one night, to escort Mrs Pinckney to a popular concert when Austin could not go. Was not the examination in Equity Pleading the next morning? Austin sat up many hours after they returned, with a wet towel around his head; even hours after his wife had dismissed her caller, gone to her room, returned in the sweetest of

laces and blue ribbons, her hair unbound, and then, with a *moue*, gone back again. The birds were singing in the twilight of the dawn when Austin tiptoed gently through his wife's room, just brushing his lips to hers as he passed, to his own little crib in the alcove beyond. Dorothy threw one white arm above her head and sighed; she did not wake up. Since her recovery, she had insisted on having her room alone; she had always had one as a girl, she said; and Austin, of course, had yielded. The Major was fond of saying that her sex were at their best as slaves, she said with a laugh; but even a slave might be queen in her bedchamber!

When the result of the examinations was known, Markoff led them all; he graduated with special distinction; as we should now say, *summa cum laude*. Wentworth and Austin both got honors, the latter passing a bit the better of the two. "You see, I am right," wrote Wentworth the following morning, "and before you get this letter, I shall be back in Springvale." To Mrs Pinckney he left a very large sheaf of roses; and Dorothy said he was "a nice boy." But Markoff surprised them all by accepting not the coveted studentship in the office of Gresham, Daubeney, Radnor & Haviland—but the paid office of managing clerk with Hitchcock, Pratt & Auerbach. "Why do you do it?" said Dorothy.

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Mrs Pinckney, as she spoke, was standing on the third rung of a step-ladder dismounting pictures. For the dismantling had come; the student life was over. However brief the home, there is something sad in the taking down of the household divinities: the unhooking of the little pictures—they meant so much, when one put them up! To be sure, one may have grown used to them since—the soft-eyed Madonna is only an engraving, the clouds of Monte Rosa only photographed. Dorothy had no sentiments about the little Cambridge house, and she looked over her muslin straight as she spoke, at Markoff, whom she had permitted, nay invited, to lounge upon the sofa, while she worked. But as she had looped up her pretty evening dress behind, so she had caught up some of the floating muslin before, with her mouth, to keep it from the dirt of the ladder; a hammer was in her right hand, a coil of picture cord in her left, so that she half-mumbled the question, half-looked it to him with her eyes. Markoff himself lolled on the sofa enjoying a rich cigar, and looking through the smoke rings at her ecstatically. “Why do you do it?” she said.

“I must have money,” he said; “I cannot afford to wait. The world is not smoothed off before me, like Austin’s. I am not, like him, happily married——”

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“And you must have the money in time to be,” Dorothy burst into silvery laughter. “It’s very foolish of you!”

Markoff sighed as gently as he could. Dorothy put her right foot on the rung above. Markoff looked at it, and did not take his eyes off it, as another man might have done; Dorothy had the daintiest of ankles, encased this evening in lavender silk. “Now you had much better wait,” Dorothy went on. “You’ll simply make the most awful mistake if you don’t! Never marry young. Wait ten years, and let me look out a girl for you, when—when——”

“When I can hope to pretend to the lady I want,” said Markoff grimly. But he did not take his eyes from her ankle: her skirt swinging revealed, now an inch more, now an inch less, of warm silken roundness.

“Oh, I didn’t mean that,” said Dorothy abashed. “Look out, I am coming!” In an impulse of sympathy for having so belittled him, she stretched forth her hands: Markoff sprang up to meet them, palm to palm, and she sprang from the round of the ladder, dropping hammer, cords, and muslin overdress. But either he was not in time or he did not resist enough; she fell almost upon his shirt front and, for one epochal second, he felt her soft body against his

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own—and he kissed her furtively, awkwardly, just above the cheek bone; but he kissed her.

Dorothy sprang away as if he had been a snake. Then first, he flushed. What her words had failed to penetrate, her physical shrinking turned scarlet. He cringed with an apology. But Dorothy, as she believed, had been born a lady, and just then, to her intense relief, she heard the street gate swing to Austin's step. They did not alter their positions, though Dorothy's lips curled a line the more as she saw Markoff reach for his hat. "Forgive it," he whispered to her again. "Forget it." The accent made her shiver, as his glance had not.

"Austin," she said, "Mr Markoff has come to say good-by to us." The words were simple enough, but an angry look showed that Markoff understood. The usual speeches were interchanged. After he had gone, Dorothy snuggled her arm under Austin's shoulder. It was evident that his simplicity—some would say his nobility—had suspected nothing; even though Dorothy was conscious of being a bit hysterical. "Austin, is Mr Markoff a Jew?"

Austin looked surprised. "I don't know," he said. "I never thought——"

"I don't like Jews, Austin. Austin, I don't ever want to see him in New York."

XV

AUSTIN took the place that had been first offered Markoff with Messrs Gresham, Daubeny, Radnor & Haviland; Dorothy (who was again spending the summer at Bar Harbor) coming to New York early in September to help him look for an apartment. Austin had had to take up his work in the office on the first of August, that month being a vacation for all the firm-name partners, though there were two or three young men, with salaries contingent on the profits, who stayed in town to manage the unavoidable business. And here the first important disagreement that arose in their married life was settled in Austin's favor. For Dorothy had inclined to a flat; she had no fondness for housekeeping, and needed all her strength for the social relations she intended to establish; moreover you got more show for your money and in a flat you could not be expected to entertain. And when they set up a house, she was inwardly determined it should be one of a dignity commensurate with her aspirations. Meantime they might appear as a charming young married couple, romantically poor, the more to be entertained by their friends; and for two persons of the names of Pinckney and Somers their

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friends might be anybody. The best investment they could meanwhile make of their little income was not a brownstone front for their house, but many satin, silk, and lace fronts for her own pretty figure. This would come to be desired at dinner parties, and Austin's brains would have their fair start.

But Dorothy did not venture on this line of reasoning with her husband; and Austin, after gloomily inspecting a few dozen flats, concluded that life in any one of them must be necessarily and inherently vulgar, and at the last gave expression to his invincible preference for his own rooftree and his own front door. And it was Dorothy who had to yield.

They found a quiet, roomy, dignified old house on East Eleventh Street. The neighborhood had been fashionable once, but the rush of the eighties to the quarter known formerly as Judæa had shrunk the rent of the Washington Square neighborhood to within their means, that is, to within Austin's six thousand a year, aided by what might dribble through to him from the elder branches of his many-headed law firm. Dorothy's mother had written her that from now on she should allow her pin-money of twenty-five hundred a year. Austin had been delighted at the news; Dorothy wondered if he expected her to devote any part of it to the household

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expenses. Perhaps she was secretly apprehensive that he might ask her for it. But it never reached beyond the pins.

For absolute leisure, there has probably (outside the harem) been nothing in the social history of humanity approaching the leisure of the fashionable New York woman, married and childless, particularly before her fashionable position has been fully established. It is peculiarly so in New York: because in no city elsewhere in the world have the leisured classes so little root in the soil. Something of the Hebrew detachment from all surroundings seems to have cast the mould of civic character for our great city; its curious lack of general public spirit, evident even to outsiders; its want of municipal solidarity, of social coördination. Even the forcing-house of municipal corruption had not yet, when the Pinckneys took up their residence there, begun to germinate the sort of antitoxin that has now, at least in politics, become hopefully visible. Whether it be merely the lazy, Dutch farmer blood, egregiously fattened, never educated, into an aristocracy by the unearned increment; whether it be the later population of keen Yankees, commercial Germans, Cubans, South Americans, since the war adventurous Southerners, coming to the teeming isle for what they might get; or whether, finally and

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again, it is the Jews that really set the New York tone—the fact remains that the people generally share with those same Jews their racial habit of being without a city, and lack the finer Hebrew quality of caring for their own. New Yorkers by their feathers are unmistakable the world over; but have nothing else—not even speech—in common; their homes are in the air like an orchid box; they share with a bird of less gay plumage the uncertainty of having no nest of their own—a fact of which, to their infinite dismay, even the sombre, shabby West has become conscious in its clumsy, national way. But thence comes that leisure of the type of New York woman that Dorothy most wished to know.

She had become very fond of Austin again; perhaps the “again” is unnecessary; but, after all, she showed it more. There was something about the little wooden house in Cambridge which cramped her soul; it now found expression, and in the sunlight and radiance of the brilliant city it expanded freely, metamorphosed like a butterfly. And now she took a real interest in their home, in the furnishing of it; she never could have taken such for one in Cambridge. She adapted herself to her husband’s will, after a few sighs for the situation, amiably. She was already proud of being a New Yorker; and there was something peculiarly old New York about

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the Washington Square neighborhood. The house was large, and that she liked; but it would take a lot of time to fill the big square rooms. She set about it at once; new cards were engraved, with their new address and "Fridays" in the lower left-hand corner; she left them on all her acquaintances she knew well enough to venture the first call upon, and then went on a looting trip to Philadelphia. The large Somers mansion contained the accumulation of many generations in the garret; it might well be that there, or even lower down, were stuffs or old mahoganies that might give just the touch of antiquity she needed in their white new house.

Meantime Austin was getting absorbed in his own business. The practice of Messrs Gresham, Daubeny, Radnor & Haviland was very varied; they had their old Knickerbocker landed-gentry clients, their staid old Manhattan Island corporations, a dash of marine business that came in through Hugh Haviland, brother to John, the banker—who had been once four years a sailor and worked himself from A.B. up to first officer at nineteen—their dash of politics of the higher kind from Daubeny, a prominent Tammany Democrat of French extraction. Then they had some fashionable trusteeships, and separate maintenances, or even suppressed divorce cases, through the younger unnamed members of the

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firm, who were for the most part young gentlemen of high social position, one of them even a leader of cotillions. These family affairs were very paying, and were usually attended to by Daubeney.

To Austin, interested in abstract jurisprudence, all these affairs presented themselves not as persons, but as problems. He hated to have legal principles brought to his knowledge as embodied in individual beings; there came at once to be something squalid about them. And though the happy days were already far off in New York when even a Dana could pride himself on not recognizing in a horse-car the client for whom he had been two weeks trying a case, one advantage of a great law-mill like that in which Austin worked was that personal affairs filtered down to him peptonized, as it were, for legal digestion, disinfected of personality, sterilized to an inorganic and external principle. There is something, after all (as in most traditional prejudices), in the old distinction between barrister and solicitor, as there is in the old prejudice in favor of the highest personal service professions as against going into trade. For, after all, the parson serves his God, the soldier his king, the physician his fellow-men—even the lawyer (if middling honest) helps to keep straight his sublunary affairs; but your trader is merely trying to make money out of you.

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Austin, therefore, was terribly hard at work. He breakfasted at eight sharp, leaving his wife in bed; by the time he had finished with the pipe and scrap of reading he never dispensed with, morning and night, she had had her coffee and was visible; still in bed, but robed in coquettish ribbons and laces. When she was in the humor, these morning calls of his would lead to kisses. Then he would hurry away, happy, and stride down town; the day was gone in a moment; tired but full of hope he walked back again at six, late enough to be in those most interesting crowds, the breadwinners; the thousands upon thousands of young girls or women that throng the ferry cross-streets seeking their distant little homes, in Long Island or New Jersey, after their ten- or eleven-hour day—how much remained for leisure or for lovemaking? Yet they seemed, on the whole, as happy as the women Austin afterwards met in “society.” Some were tired and pale, but many were bright, and most were brave, and quite a few even pretty. Alas, that the prettiest should so often be the brightest and the bravest! But things are not yet all well in this world—were it so, all would be beautiful. For is not all ugliness the result of something wrong?

Dorothy, her shopping over, had found the day go somewhat slower until, coming home, Austin

would make love to her as she would let him. Usually in the evening (it was still October) they would go to the theatre together and occasionally have supper at Delmonico's. For Austin had joined no important club as yet, in order that he might have pocket money for their pleasures, nor could any club yet compete. Thus their first winter passed. And, secretly, Austin prayed every night and morning for another child.

XVI

FEW of our popular novels deal with the life of the simply rich; and poor as Dorothy thought herself, to the chief of our newspaper public they would rank with the rich. "Who drives fat horses should himself be fat"—heavy coachmen command, we are told, a better wage than thin. And who would live with the rich should be rich himself. This truth Dorothy, with all her welcome, began to feel; of course, it was well enough, for a few years, to be the petted friends, Austin the rising young lawyer, she the "show girl," of the week-end party. All good dinner givers like beauty at their boards—and beauty need only dress the part. But when they were older and had children—and she meant some day to have children—how then?

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Yet the merely rich have not been the popular subject of the best novels—those, I mean, which pretend to literature. The public, reading books, professes—or we profess it for them—to be interested only in the struggling hero, the cottage maid; villains, indeed, may be rich, but heroes must struggle. The same public, reading newspapers, is fascinated by the supposed realism of the “Society column” dealing only with the rich—and the newspapers usually know what people like. Can it be that it is but a stage tradition—are our bookmen wrong?

Factory girls, domestics, indeed, as we are told, will read, in their *Ledgers* or *Saturday Nights*, of nothing but the rich, their doings and their undoings. And farmers’ daughters, kept away from college, living with their shirt-sleeved brothers and friends’ brothers on the prairie farm, in the *Ukraine* of the West, may doubtless want to read of black-coated gentlemen in shiny shirts and hats. Society ladies, marooned in Peoria or San Diego, must have telegraphed to them the names of Mrs Rastacq’s dinner party. May we not, then, hope the reader will bear with us the next few chapters? They have their human interest; and the occurrences in them were of absorbing interest to Dorothy.

But the factory girls, perhaps even the farmers’ daughters, want idealism. As they will in no wise

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read tales about themselves—they are at one with our society leaders in caring nothing for the million—the life of the eighty million, the real American life, remains a sealed book; at least it would be, in any free library, an uncut one. Their novels must deal exclusively with the Four Hundred—or let us at least say, more generously, the four thousand. (We believe there are about four thousand millionaires in the United States; and even the factory girl is intolerant of senseless distinctions; one millionaire is as good as another.) And their key must be pitched to that idealism where the heroine must always recline in point lace and diamonds, or “tool” a pair of polished bays; the hero, corrupt to the core, roll his cigarettes in a club window or be “opening” a bottle of “wine”—and the factory girl herself not enter, save, perhaps, as that hero’s prey, to be cast aside like a faded flower when his caprice has ended. How vie with this idealism? How compete with these ladies and gentlemen who do the trick—unknown authors, we have the impudence to call those purveyors of literature to His Majesty, the sovereign people.

Yet Austin’s life was a true one, and Dorothy’s, she thought, a very real one; why then the millions, who after all live truly, should they not find it interesting? Dorothy really lives and moves in that

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Four Hundred; may not our brush have color to make the reader credit it? It can but paint the facts. I do not find upon my palette the scarlet of a Corelli, a Ouida's mauve and rose, even the splendid primary tints so thick laid on by those bright geniuses above referred to—whose names I durst not mention even if I could remember. Let us then dare to be plain—even if we forego our cream-colored (*sic*) bays, our diamonds at breakfast.

For Dorothy—more easily than she hoped—had found her footing. Birth in America will do as much as elsewhere—even in money-making New York it has its influence. The Somerses were people of established social relations; the Austins, still more the Pinckneys, were families whose history “bore” (as one would say in heraldry) that of the United States themselves—or shall we say *itself*? All our history has thus far turned on the conflict of those two meanings; and if the Pinckneys, aristocrats of South Carolina, had stood historically for the former, the Austins, Federalists of Massachusetts, had wrought for the latter reading—and prevailed. They had numbered a Signer, an Envoy, a Secretary of State, a Senator, a Governor—until the present John, Pinckney's double cousin, who was only a pillar of Newport society. As such he had, by the very inventor of the famous Four Hun-

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dred, a planter at Goose Creek, been referred to as "coming from a middle-class family"! Oh, these South Carolinians! But it did John Austin lots of good; was, in fact, the cause of his leaving Nahant. Pinckney's father, to be sure (no one now quite knew why), with all the family's ability, had been but a poor Consul, accredited in his youth to Carlsruhe, whence he never stirred. But we wander from our subject, which is Dorothy. If the Gansevoorts ignored her, the rival leaders—Mrs Gower, Mrs Rastacq—took her up. The latter indeed, on hearing her story, sent her, for the second night of the opera, her box, where she bloomed, radiant to her very eyebrows, before the house of Gansevoort across the way.

And it must have been that this appearance at the opera had seemed in a way to be an assumption of court rank; the newspapers recognized her as one of the younger "queens of society"; her portrait was syndicated to the Woman's section of the Sunday newspapers. She was a "pretty person." Even her husband was presentable and intelligent. And when her visiting card appeared, with its house address and its "Fridays" in the lower left-hand corner, both were accepted; her afternoons were attended by those whom our newspapers again would call our best people—and indeed

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you may wish yourself as sure of the next world as they are sure of this. Really, a flat—even a smaller house more fashionably situated—would have been inconvenient. Dorothy often thought how different it all was from those dingy days in Cambridge; this was life.

She had, one Monday afternoon, a curious reminder of those days in Cambridge, though. It was in their second New York winter. By that time her Fridays had grown to be sufficient of an institution to be mentioned in those sometimes inconvenient newspapers; and it was on the first of them, after their return from the Catskills, that he appeared. How did he ever know my day? she unimaginatively reflected. Anyway, he had been clever enough to note it; and she was undeniably at home; there were a dozen people there. But he had not been quite clever enough to walk in, hat in hand; the drawing-room could not have been denied him, had he (she hired a butler for the day) had his name announced. He only sent up his card, "Mr Augustus Markoff." As it was, she did not hesitate a moment: she was (undeniably to Mr Markoff) "not at home."

It mattered nothing to her; little more, perhaps, to Markoff, though he smiled a bit grimly in his mustache as he walked back to Fifth Avenue; she was only making her way, he, not without approval, rec-

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ognized, esteeming her on that account no less desirable; their paths would cross fast enough; how little, after all, she knew! For he was making his way, too.

It mattered more, perhaps, to our hero—and yet, that night, when they talked over the events of the day, she felt as if she could hardly tell him. Bolting it, at last she did, feeling her temples reddened; Austin, however, did not notice the blush. “Oh, yes—I remember—you did not like him at the end, in Cambridge—he has added the ‘*us*’ in New York,” said he, in amused inspection of the otherwise faultless card. For it was small, quite white, and not shiny; it even had no period after the name, which is the ultimate earmark of a smart pasteboard. And so, as it happened, Dorothy forgot this incident.

And then, in the evening, they went to a dinner, where Dorothy wore—but really one can’t be always describing her gowns! It was a very grand dinner, though I fear there was no Roman punch in the middle of it. *Per contra*, there was terrapin; and, when the ladies were alone in the drawing-room, it took four flunkies to serve them their coffee—one the cups, one the coffee, one the cream and sugar, a fourth the cigarettes—there is something peculiarly sensation about a lady’s cigarettes, particularly

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when smoked with a gown cut low— Have we not now got the necessary thrill to our readers of the million?—Dorothy, too, was thrilled.

But oh, our thoughtful thousand, bear with us and desert us not. These are not trifles. The doings of our well-to-do may neither be all evil nor all dull. There is a world worth studying outside the realms of Dialect, contemporary not historical, whose lives even when idle are not negligible. We make the bluff of thinking not; our magazines ignore them; our newspapers know better. Suggested to the imagination of eighty millions, a Mrs Gower does not lead her cynic's life in vain; or even reckless Mamie Rastacq, copied throughout our land in manners and in aims, fail to count. And the quiet wives and mothers count—though it be to fewer. They are never described by the syndicates to the middle West, nor are their pictures sold upon Broadway. And, lover and bride, our Dorothy counts—though it be to Austin Pinckney only—for he had married her, in cure of her soul.

XVII

SOME weeks after this, as Austin was sitting alone in the little cell that served as his private office, trying to draw a railroad mortgage, he

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was surprised to hear the boy announce "Mr Mark-off." And that gentleman pressed so close upon the heels of his messenger that before Austin could recover from his embarrassment his old classmate was in the room.

But if Austin was conscious of a certain shyness, Markoff showed no *mauvaise honte*—*mauvaise* or otherwise. Perhaps he did not suppose that young American wives burden their husbands with all their little social difficulties. Or perhaps he assumed that such trifles should not stand in the way of business. For he began by saying:

"I have come on a little matter of business—" as he threw himself into a chair.

"Sit down," said Austin, rather belatedly, resuming his own.

Markoff, with an all-embracing eye, looked around the office; the draft of the mortgage lay open upon the desk.

"Ah, I see you are in that Allegheny Central business. The fact is, the matter I came about relates, in a way, to that." Austin said nothing, and Markoff went on, as in a burst of confidence: "You see, I've got a client who owns a railroad. It is only partly built as yet; but it will be quite necessary to the Allegheny Central. We have called it the Allegheny Pacific. To complete it, my client has an

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issue of bonds to place—fifteen millions in all—of which twelve million two hundred thousand or so are to be held to meet prior underlying mortgages. The other twenty-eight hundred thousand are offered for sale. Austin—” and Markoff suddenly resumed his college manner, his hand on Pinckney’s knee—“I thought of you at once. You’ve got the social connections—I haven’t. Your uptown connections, I mean; they’re the best for this sort of thing.”

Austin had risen instinctively, so that Markoff now stood facing him, his eye on the other’s scarf-pin, as he added, impressively, “the commission is two and a half per cent—to divide between us.”

“But I thought the Allegheny Central had its Western connections?” Austin did not know just what to say.

“It has—of a kind. Have you got a map?”

“There are maps in the outer office,” and Austin, seeing his way of escape, led his friend rapidly into the general room. Markoff took out a long lead pencil and laid the point of it upon a city on the map; then gently moved it to the left, along a narrow blank space between two railroad lines, carefully avoiding any tracing on the paper.

“You see,” he said, “here is Steam City—our present Eastern terminus. And here” (making a

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dot) "is Bellefontaine. And here is the Bellefontaine Pacific. And here" (making another dot) "is Chicago."

"You don't mean to extend to Chicago?"

"Not perhaps at once. The present issue carries us only to Bellefontaine. But I don't mind telling you"—and again his manner became confidential—"we, that is, my client, controls the Bellefontaine Pacific. You see the strategic position?"

"I can only see that you parallel between two old established railroads."

Markoff lifted his eye from the scarfpin to a point in space over Pinckney's left shoulder.

"That, perhaps, is an element in the situation. Our bonds are to be offered at ninety-five—one per cent off to bankers, or large investors who mean to sell again, you know. Here you can be a little elastic." Markoff made a move as if to return to the private office, but Pinckney remained standing.

"Markoff, I can't do it—I— I don't know the people. Why don't you go to Auerbach?"

"They haven't taken me into partnership. He knows nothing of this—it's all my own affair. I can give it to whom I like. And I thought at once of you."

"It's very kind of you—but I really can't."

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Markoff's eye wavered to his for a moment.

"The commission is on the whole fifteen millions."

"I can't," said Austin decisively. "The Allegheny Central is our client. Anyhow, I'm not in that line of business. I'm a lawyer—at least, I want to be."

Markoff looked at him compassionately. Then he spoke, aloud this time:

"The Allegheny Central had better look after itself. You know that broken-down fellow on the street—curbstone broker, note shaver, I don't know what not—Townley, I mean? Ruined him, and ruined half a dozen others, hardly ten years ago. Well, old fellow, I must be going. No harm done. I'm glad to have given you the chance, that's all."

"Of course, I'm much obliged to you——"

"Anyhow, I'm glad they've got you to draw their mortgage——"

Pinckney looked at him inquiringly.

"They haven't got another that'll foreclose," cried Markoff, as he smilingly took his leave.

"Who was that I heard talking Allegheny Central?" said Mr Gresham, as he came out on his way to lunch, buttoning his gloves.

"Markoff—he was at the law school with me."

"They say that young man draws a very good mortgage."

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"He says there isn't one on the Allegheny Central that can be foreclosed," laughed Pinckney.

"Perhaps that's what they mean," said Mr Gresham gravely. "What did he want?"

"He offered to divide with me a commission to help place some railroad bonds."

"Come along to lunch." It was the first time that Mr Gresham had invited Austin to lunch. "What were they? Of course, he didn't mean you to tell me."

"The Allegheny Pacific; new general mortgage," Austin unhesitatingly replied. "Two and a half per cent commission, on all the bonds."

"Then he's already divided the commission once—with Tamms. It can't have been less than five per cent; that would have been robbing themselves. He divides with Tamms; and then he divides but half with you."

"With Tamms?"

"Tamms is his client, of course. He got up this Allegheny Pacific scheme. He's been trying to get back into Allegheny Central ever since they ousted him. He had to go to Canada for some years. It was he who drew those mortgages your friend refers to. And what did you say?"

"I refused it," said Austin. "I didn't think it was law business. Was I right?"

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“According to the old school,” smiled Mr Gresham. Mr Gresham was the Nestor of the bar; no man stood higher. He rarely appeared save in the highest courts, as senior to a retinue of other lawyers; and then his appearance, though terrifying, was yet hailed by the other side as a sort of signal of distress. “But it was business—from the point of view of—what did you say his name was? Markoff. It may have seemed good business to him. Keep your eye on him—perhaps he meant to be friendly.”

Austin walked home that night, a little tired, to find his Dorothy in a depression of spirits she was at no pains to conceal. The fact that she was not quite sure whether it was a house for the summer or a carriage for the winter that she needed most—or even, simply, more gowns—made it none the easier to deal with. She could not formulate it to Austin, and he failed to discover the source of her trouble. But when, for the sake of conversation, he told her that Markoff had been to see him, she tapped her foot angrily and called that rising gentleman an impudent cad. To Austin’s surprised look she added, “And what did he want?”

“He wanted me to sell some bonds on commission.”

Somewhat mollified the girl replied, “Oh, it was

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business." And something in her tone was so like that of Mr Markoff's that Austin looked at her again.

"I mean"—(she was rather confused; her pride had always stood in the way of confessing that Cambridge scene)—"I mean, would there have been much profit in it, Austin?"

"He calculated it at three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars," laughed the young husband, "for the two of us."

"Oh, Austin!"

"But it was not a lawyer's business. Moreover, I had my doubts about the bonds."

Dorothy made a pretty little grimace. Then she rumbled his hair. "You dear old fellow," she said. "You'll never get on. So you sent him away?"

"Wouldn't you have had me? You sent him away first," laughed Austin. "For a Jew, he betrayed a most Christian spirit."

"Well," said Dorothy, "under those circumstances I should have asked him to call."

"Do you want me to?"

"N-no," said Dorothy. "He will come again fast enough. At least, he will when I want him."

But Mr Markoff did not call again that winter.

XVIII

THERE had been something petulant in Dorothy's tones as she made her last remark, and Austin took up the evening paper. There had often been a petulance, a sense of suppressed irritation, in her tones of late, and he had tried in vain to find of what he was guilty. He had not, perhaps, given her a carriage, or a country house—no, it could be nothing so crude as that; yet, he felt sure, when a young wife was out of humor it must be a matter for the husband to cure.

Old Major Brandon had met him at the club a day or two before, and had not inquired about his wife, as was his wont. But he had done a thing which struck Austin as, for him, in most inexplicable bad taste. "Any babies yet?" he had asked brutally. It was true, he had been away for a year. And no one else was present.

Austin had laughingly replied—the only way possible to lighten the speech to common courtesy—but the old man had showed no compunction.

"Too many gowns—too many gowns," he grumbled. "In the natural marriage, the woman brought no gowns—you knocked her down with a club. But in due course of time she had a baby." The

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Major's approval of primitive marriage was well known.

"And when the man had beaten her black and blue and she had worn out herself and lost her comeliness in his service, he'd want another wife," laughed Austin. "Was it better for her to be a mother once and a drudge forever after?"

"Call her his slave if you like, the natural woman loves slavery—her very virtues and vices are those of a slave—fidelity, endurance, devotion, love of ornament, jealousy, hatred of other women—the error began when man first made a slave into his ideal— She? She was happy enough. There was once a woman who lived her first eighteen years in the harem of the Sultan of Zanzibar; then she escaped, with a boat's crew of sailors, and married a German supercargo. She lived sixty years in Berlin, a German *hausfrau*; then her husband died and she wrote a book about it. She much preferred her life in the harem at Zanzibar——"

"Does that prove that you would have me treat Dorothy like a German *hausfrau*?"

The Major grumbled. "All the same it is the fine lady that will ultimately destroy modern civilization—particularly in a great democracy corrupt in money matters but correct in morals. Here's a man I want you to know."

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A singularly handsome man, looking like a Ouida's guardsman at nigh to fifty, was passing by.

"Van Kull, this is my young friend Charles Austin Pinckney. You may have heard of the family. You know his wife, I believe."

If the gentleman so waylaid felt any impatience at the importunity, nothing in his manner showed it. His eyes rested but a moment on the Major's; turning them fully and openly upon Austin's, he held out his hand. His face was curious for a mixture of intense, almost feminine fairness with masculine strength, and under the gleam of a wonderfully winning pair of blue eyes his long yellow mustaches were those of the *beau sabreur's*. "I am but just back, or I'd have called," said he.

"Van Kull lives in Paris. Here he only forays," the Major explained.

"My coupons are cut in an office on Pine Street," smiled Van Kull.

"Who ever called you dull, Killian?" asked the Major.

"Dunno—'bout every one, I guess." He turned to Austin. "See you at the ball to-night? It is at the Antoine Rastacq's, Major——"

"Didn't know you went to balls——"

Out of his sleepy eyelids the younger man shot a glance which the Major bore with his wonted placid-

ity. But Austin looked at his watch. The remark reminded him that, of course, his wife meant to go. And he was very tired. . . .

She came down to dinner in a wrapper. It had never been her habit to be slovenly, even before her servants, and Austin was formally dressed.

"I am dreadfully tired—and I must go to that ball to-night——"

"Why don't you give it up?"

"Mrs Rastacq's? I'll not go till one o'clock, though. And I'm just going to put myself in bed and going to sleep." She drew the soft wrapper about her shoulders, and Austin noticed how thin she was. She had hardly eaten a morsel. He spoke of it.

"Oh, am I?" Dorothy sprang up and looked at a glass. "I'm only a hundred and thirty yet. They say Mrs Rastacq has got herself down to a hundred and nineteen."

"I trust you don't think Mamie Rastacq a good model."

"Quite—for the altogether," laughed Dorothy. "We weren't speaking of her character. Now I must run up and lie down; don't you come and bother me, there's a good fellow."

Austin betook himself into the library, where he

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worked an hour or two; then he threw himself in an easy chair and fell asleep. He awoke, after midnight, in a strange sinking of spirits; the fire had gone out, and he was chilly. He took himself upstairs, to go to bed, forgetting the ball; as he passed his wife's door he turned the handle; the sudden glare of light blinded him. Dorothy, in a bright blaze of candles, was sitting before a mirror; only her white shoulders were turned toward him, but he could see her thin dryad arms, and, in the mirror, an anxious face. Two maids were anxiously lacing her. She cried to him to go out and dress. . . .

At the ball, feeling himself still blinking, Austin found himself alone with his hostess. She looked after his wife, who had dropped his arm at their very courtesy; he at her. She was a slender, beautiful woman—of the dangerous age one had called it, but that all her ages had been dangerous. He knew her because she had been a great friend, a younger cousin, indeed, of his great friends, the John Havilands; and as he looked at her, he marveled. His wife was already dancing on the arm of some youth, with two more anxiously waiting for her at the ballroom door. And while Austin was wondering, she made a speech. (The next day, still

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wondering, as they walked downtown, he asked John Haviland about his wife's cousin.) "Your wife is quite the most charming thing we have had lately in New York. *Her* man hasn't come yet. He always comes late." This was her speech. Austin was still too new to New York not to start, for an eyelid's breath, at the studied coarseness of the fashionable phrase. Mrs Rastacq noticed it and laughed.

"How nice it is to see you care! But I was only chaffing. Who can keep her, if you can't?"

Not so dull as to feel sure she was not chaffing still, Austin only looked at her. Dorothy had been right. Tall and wonderfully graceful,

"Her eye was like the wave within,
And on her body, dainty thin—"

she wore a fabric which, though loose, still outlined close her slimness. She weighed no more than Dorothy had said; but not a bone showed in the long, white arms, the girlish neck. Her eyes held his laughingly. "Well, are you satisfied?"

Mamie was *bon enfant*—all her enemies said as much—and the masculine adjective suited her in more ways than one. She was a good fellow—men said, a good companion. Even her envious older rival, Mrs Malgam, said that she left her men all friends.

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“Come, let us walk about. I must show you the world, little boy. You are friend to my good cousin Grace. She would not come here to-night.”

(This she said without a trace of malice; and Austin spoke of it when, on the walk, John said how they two had fallen away. They were friends still; but Gracie never went, to meet her people, to her house.)

“Is there much for me to learn in a ballroom?”

“Don’t be a prig. Perhaps. Didn’t everything that happened to you that was really important happen to you in a ballroom?”

Austin demurred, but she slipped her arm (they were walking) from his to his shoulder, and, as it might have happened to Alice in Wonderland, he found himself waltzing. Her body was light as thistledown, and occasionally she would draw back her dark head, like some beautiful serpent, and show him a pair of eyes too lovely to sparkle so with malice. With all her masculine ways he could still feel that it was a woman that was on his arm—

“There,” she said, “you are not so much of a prig as I thought. Now that you’ve not been too impatient, we’ll go look after that wife of yours.”

They paused a minute at the doorway leading to a conservatory. The ballroom was a sea of tossing heads, of billows of tulle and laces, of flashing

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eyes and gleaming shoulders. The black coats made the necessary shadow. "Almost every woman looks happy when she's dancing," mused Mrs Rastacq. Austin smiled as he remembered the Major's words.

"The dancing girls in a harem?"

"Perhaps—I'd like to try—think of the Sultan, leaning his great bare back against the furs of his divan, looking lazily at us over his nargileh—think of the fun of getting him from the other girls! The men don't, though." And the dreamy look vanished from Mamie's eyes and the twinkle in them returned—they still stood at the door—as she looked them over. But two or three expressions lay in all the men's faces—fatuity, anxiety, or grim determination. "Now a man who could look as a woman does when he dances is the man—the man I should *not* love," her sentence ended. Austin laughed.

"Your second thought is the best."

"In a ballroom—or just out of it." They had come into the grateful gloom of the conservatory. Mrs Rastacq's conversation was both elusive and inconsequent. "There's your wife," said she. "Now you can keep her; I must go."

"Let me take you back," a deep voice said languidly. It was Killian Van Kull's great figure that erected itself from the gloom and offered to lead

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their hostess away with that assurance that forty years had given of the experience that all his world would accept his lead. Austin felt himself flush, as his wife turned red.

“No, since there are two, we’ll leave you together,” said Mamie. “But I’ll get you another girl,” she added to Austin, as she led him away. “You’re a dear.”

“My dear Mrs Rastacq——”

“‘Although old enough to be my mother——’”

“That wasn’t what I was about to say——”

“But I’m your hostess, and if you want to say anything else, I must get you another girl. There! Isn’t it lovely? You may take your pick.”

She meant the ballroom again; it was at its height of animation; four o’clock in the morning, and even the men had waked up. The younger girls had gone to supper, or were sitting out; it was the married women, dancing.

“Wouldn’t you think that they enjoyed it even more? Yet how many of them—respectable mothers of families as they mostly are—for how many of them, do you think, Mr Pinckney——”

The tone of her voice had quite changed, and Austin looked from the ballroom back to her.

“—For how many of them is there not, somewhere in the world, one voice—in the world, at least,

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of space and time—one voice which, if it called to them, so that they could hear it, here and now, they would not leave the dance—this dance, *any* dance—children, husbands, position—leave them here and now—and cross the street or cross the world to where that voice was heard? ”

The woman's voice had sunken almost to a whisper and her face was pale.

“ Have I frightened you? Well, get me some supper. No, get yourself some. There comes your wife with her *beau sabreur*—heavens! what will they think if you're still here? And he the only man I ever could love who had a large mustache—” Mamie was again irresistible, and Austin burst out laughing.

“ But where shall I see you again? ”

“ You don't want to see me again, young man. If it's my second thoughts that are the best, my first acquaintance is. Then, I tell my friends all my truth and anything else that's good for them to know. After that, my conscience is discharged.”

“ I can't imagine you without conscience! ”

Mrs Rastacq darted a new glance at him. “ Well, after supper.”

(Walking down, next day, Haviland told him how poor Mamie had set her heart, at eighteen, on Charlie Townley; he turned out worthless. Noth-

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ing scandalous about him—at least he was not the principal sinner—but his old uncle lost his mind and Charlie was ruined. And Mamie still would marry him, but her parents would not hear of it, and they pleaded with her successfully. Then two or three good fellows had been in love with her. But she flung herself madly into the world, until, at twenty-five, she married old Rastacq—a vicious old *viveur* of sixty, enormously rich, but some sort of a creole or dago—“not even a Frenchman,” said the narrow-minded John. This time Grace had pleaded with her even unto tears, but her family had given in. Rastacq still liked to give balls, but was too old to go to them; if he was here to-night, he was somewhere with a pretty woman, upstairs. He would stay down long enough to receive them, and then the favored ones would come and talk to him in his library.)

After supper, though it was nearly six, Dorothy would not go home. Now she was dancing; Van Kull appeared to have left her; and, coming away from her, Austin found his hostess standing fearlessly by the strong light in the main hall. And the woman of thirty looked like a maid of sixteen.

“The *beau sabreur* not gone yet? I love to see my little boy blush.”

Austin was angry, and threw himself into a

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chair. "Tell me, you that might have been my mother, how do you keep so young?"

Mamie, still standing, chose thus to punish him: she bent from her height until her eyes were on a level with his, lifting one fair arm to lay her hand lightly on his shoulder, as, rudely, he still sat there. Her gown fell loose; in another woman it might have been an impropriety; but her slim body was like a boy's. So she paused a moment, and might have been the statue of a youthful temptress. But then, putting her face so near his that her breath moved his hair, she whispered very softly:

"By having no heart in it.—And that's the last truth I shall tell you!" she shouted, as she sprang back and ran off, like a young fawn, to dismiss the laggards.

Among the last of these was Dorothy. They came home in the hired coupé, silent; Austin still vaguely angry. Gradually his mood changed; but Dorothy was nervous—and distinctly cross. Coming home, she submitted to one kiss, and then dismissed him at her door. It was an hour or two before Austin, tired as he had been at midnight, could get to sleep again.



“She whispered very softly: ‘By having no heart in it!’”

XIX

AUSTIN'S means did not permit of a summer house; and it seems to be an accepted fact that New York or its neighborhood is impossible in the heated months—at least—for ladies. But it happened that Dorothy's younger sister was about her "coming out"; and so Mrs Somers made rather an exceptional summer present—it was a thousand dollars—to Dorothy, provided she would take "Daisy" with her and "go where they liked." Daisy was shorter than her sister and not nearly so pretty; but Mrs Somers was of opinion that a beautiful elder, married, sometimes makes the younger "go." Whether it was that poor Daisy was to shine by Dorothy's reflected light, or whether it could be thought there were men who, finding the beauty undisposible, would take the next best thing in the family, the fact had fallen within range of Mrs Somers's observation.

"They liked" Newport; after all (said Dorothy) it was the only place where you might be sure a *débutante* would meet no one she ought not to; and Austin, while not recognizing this among the most obvious virtues of that resort, assented. Naturally their thousand dollars, even with the other thousand

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that Austin managed to spare, would not have carried them very far in housekeeping; but with it they managed to pass a few months in what were called Cléry's cottages: *Anglicè*, a boarding house, where they had accommodations about as commodious as are enjoyed, anywhere in Northern America, in his "Queen Anne" cottage by the carpenter or the plumber. But they were thus excused from the duty of making that show which, Dorothy deemed, her station in life demanded, and no one could expect them to entertain. And Newport had the advantage that Austin could easily get to his wife of a Sunday: a privilege not shared by many New York men, whose wives pass their summers on the Maine coast with college boys or detached *attachés*—and which, to the former at least, does a great deal of harm.

But Austin and his wife were growing farther and farther apart. We have not tried—or, if so, we have not succeeded—in keeping this from the reader. The good old Major had seen it first, a year before. It had troubled him deeply; though the match had not been of his making, Austin's marriage had been the romance of his declining years; and the Major (who would have thought it?) loved a romance. When he had seen the girl, she had seemed, to his partial eye at least, beautiful enough for the rôle; and she had some of the fire, the in-

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trepidity, that the exigencies of her part demanded. Had a baby come into the world, the Major would have claimed, if not paternal, at least avuncular honors. It was really to escape the spectacle of their coming estrangement that he had been abroad that year—whence he had returned with Killian Van Kull. The Major had never hitherto regarded that predatory sportsman from the domestic point of view. He now thought it necessary to warn his Dorothy—like any old clucking hen. “My dear, he is one of the thoroughly *evil* men I know—he is really *bad!*” But the only effect of the Major’s use of this adjective (and it has a humorous sound) was to move his Dorothy to uncontrollable merriment. When she recovered she intimated, to the Major’s astonished ears, that she herself was not a chicken, and that he himself had introduced the hawk. As for Daisy (who was by) she naturally yearned to meet him.

Then the Major remembered how, at the end, he had been puzzled by Dorothy at Cambridge. “I believe she was trying it on—on *ME!*” he muttered to himself. But as Dorothy fell in his estimation his affection for Austin redoubled. If *only* (thought he) he would keep up his wife’s devotion with a club!

What the Major felt, after all, does not much matter. Nor perhaps would it so much have mat-

tered if it were Dorothy alone who was (to say an Irishry) drifting apart. But the Major was quite a deep enough observer to see, and student of human nature profound enough to realize, how much the worse thing this was, that Austin was—beginning not to love her. For the harm to a fine-natured man comes not from any wrong the woman he loves does to him. Such a soul as the noblest are, is designed to love but one. To cease to love, in such a man, is almost such an injury as, to a maid, is the loss of her virginity. Or else, as perhaps Austin did (his mind far too clear and strong to juggle with him on the great facts of life), he finds the truth—that he has never loved at all; then is his soul most vulnerable to Satan. He imputes to his past action the shame of sex; grows hard, like a lost woman; listens to the Spirit that Denies.

When Austin went to Newport, he did not stay at his wife's cottage. To begin with, as she pointed out, it would be indecent: they must share one room; she had only two bedrooms and a bath; and Daisy was the sort of girl whose wrapper never *would* stay buttoned and who was always floating around the apartment in ballet costume. So Austin, perforce, would take a room at the Ocean House, where, in the last years of that hostelry, he witnessed an expiring social phase, and watched, not without inter-

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est, the struggles of the few scattering families of Cubans or Southwesterners who came to Newport thus to mingle in High Life—dimly conscious now that it was limited to the pleasure of reading, in their own Louisville or Denver newspaper, below the account, minutely detailed, of Mrs Rastacq's gown at Mrs Levison-Gower's dinner, and of Mrs Malgam's every movement of the day—(and no Western paper is so poor or so remote as to omit its weekly column of these doings—ye gods of a democracy, tell us why!)—“At Newport also are Mr and Mrs Orville C. Creamer and their charming daughters, the well-known merchant of this city.” But the daughters, when back in Sioux City, knew every one of these ladies intimately by sight, to the very knots in the backs of their gowns.

It was the custom of Austin Pinckney to read his business letters in the morning, answer them, if possible, by telegraph, and then, after breakfast, be free to give his day to Dorothy—or so much of it as she would accept. And one lovely August morning he was sitting in the little old park by the old stone mill, reading a letter from his senior. It was to the effect that they had a client of long standing—no longer, perhaps, very prosperous or very reputable (Austin read between the lines)—that he was particularly anxious about a corporation in

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which he was largely interested, and that his gout, "etc." (Gresham had underlined the *etc.*), would really prevent his coming to the city to consult with them, and he lived, for the moment, near the Ocean House, "and might be heard of" there; would not Mr Pinckney, who was on the spot, have the kindness to consult with him? His name was Mr Miles Breese. As Austin read this name, he was conscious of a slight shadow on the path before him, causing him to look up from the garden seat and see a slender girl, who had just passed by; she walked rapidly away, so that he could not see her face, but her gait had an indescribable blending of youth and grace and dignity, and any man, though looking after her shoulders alone, would have an indescribably acquired conviction that she was beautiful.

Austin turned back to his letters and finished them. Then he sat in the shade and waited. The loveliness of the hour and the sweet season availed nothing to lighten his heart. Nothing unusual and nothing very agreeable had happened in the evening before with his wife. Nothing, certainly, to cause the strange presentiment—a suggestion, not a presentiment—that his life was at an end. He thought, with a half smile, of Schopenhauer, of his Presentation—presentment—and his Will, "The Will to Life." Nothing had happened. But it would have seemed

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strange to him had he known that on that very seat, in that very hour and season, almost to the very day, some forty years before, his own father's will to live had ended.

XX

COMING back to the enormous dreary dining room, Austin, conducted as a lonely male to an inconspicuous table in the rear, was surprised at a figure he saw at a table near by, covered, like his own, with breakfast things, only near a window and not, as it appeared, reserved for men only. Surely he could not be mistaken—it was Miss Aylwin. What could she be doing here!

Miss Aylwin (no one, unless perhaps it were Mr Gresham himself, knew her first name) was a quiet, very beautiful young lady, still young, but who for ten years past had been the most trusted stenographer, bookkeeper, clerk, in their law office. It was not the custom to have women stenographers in important New York law offices; but to her the most momentous documents—foreclosure suits, applications for receiverships, motions for injunction—were intrusted for their typewriting and copying, in those secret copy books to which she only, and the firm members themselves, had access. Often—in her

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locked desk if not in her mind—Miss Aylwin kept secrets which meant millions of loss or gain to one who prematurely used them. Old Mr Gresham used to assert that there was no safer confidential clerk than a good woman. He had brought the girl, when she was hardly twenty, from the little Hampshire country town where he was born; and introduced her to the partners with only the one word of explanation that she was a woman who wished to support two infirm parents and needed, for doing this, a city salary. And she had grown to the place so that she now kept the boxes and envelopes of Mr Gresham's most confidential affairs; the bookkeeping, petty cash, and salaries were intrusted to her as paymaster. She had gained the confidence of all; so much so that the little disputes or jealousies of the office force, ambitions for higher wages, claims as to precedence, were by common consent intrusted to her for settlement: so much so that even the more frivolous Radnor would admit—though ascribing it avowedly to feminine lack of interest in business rather than to feminine discretion as to secrets intrusted to her—that she was the safest confidential clerk they had. But woe be to the clerk or visitor whom even Radnor had caught presuming to admire Miss Aylwin's exterior, presuming to comment on her very existence! As for the underlings, not one

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of them but was her devoted slave. It happened there was no one of an age to be in love with her; between the partners and the official old bookkeeper and the managing clerk there was no one until you came to the students and the office boy—except indeed the scrivener (conveyancing clerk they called him), who, having in vain laid his affections at Miss Aylwin's feet, was now making her the confidante of his more successful overtures to a young lady of his own class in Orange.

What could she be doing here? Austin rose: then some instinct or impulse—he thought he saw a slight flushing in her averted face—made him hesitate. Just then the negro clattered down with the dozen oval dishes that contained Austin's breakfast, and he availed himself of this incident to cover his retreat. It never for one moment occurred to him to question Miss Aylwin's reasons for being there. If the Ocean House, at Newport, was not a natural sanatorium for aged parents, it was doubtless that they were housed near by. Or, if it did not seem the quietest, or even the safest, resort for a young working woman on her vacation, he doubted not there was some other natural cause. As far as the expense mattered, he knew that her salary was ample to afford it. After all, a lady of thirty might, in America, go where she liked. When he left the

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hall he was careful not to meet her eye; though he could not help noticing that she was very prettily, quietly dressed in white, and had at her waist a bunch of very lovely roses. The next morning he applauded himself for his resolution when he saw that she had changed her seat to the most distant table. It was evident that her desire was, by him, to be unobserved.

“Mr Miles Breese was to be heard of,” his partner’s letter ran, “by applying to the head clerk of the Ocean House.” So, coming out of the breakfast room, he left with that gentleman an envelope containing his card. Then he wrote his letters; and about noon betook himself to Cléry’s cottages, where Daisy, still in her dressing sack, received him. Dorothy, she explained, had a headache and was not yet up. Austin had recently been taught the lesson not to disturb her at her toilet; so he entertained himself and his sister-in-law as best he might until, after one o’clock, Dorothy came down. At half past one they had a lunch engagement at a very great house, which, though of highest interest to Austin’s wife, has none for Austin’s story. At three they returned, finding Daisy, who had made a *moue* at being left behind alone, now radiant in the company of a social Personage. It was Mr Killian Van Kull. He had asked her, it appeared, to take the ocean

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drive with him; and she looked to Dorothy, it appeared, for a perfunctory consent. To Austin's surprise, his wife did not withhold it; he hardly saw his way to overruling them both in the man's presence. There was no time to pretend a headache; the T-cart, groom, and pair were there; the best he could do was to alter the plan to quieter Purgatory, and say that he and his wife would drive there too, and bring the tea basket. The Personage took it indifferently, as an old player who has read his junior's hand. Driving behind them, though already not in sight, Austin tried his best to speak to his wife kindly and gravely.

"Dorothy, you cannot mean to marry your sister to Van Kull—and I am sure he does not mean to marry her."

"You need not worry about Daisy," she answered pointedly. "Kill Van Kull is fifty or more; when he takes up a young girl coming out, it makes her reputation."

"And how much does he leave her when he is through with her?" But at this Dorothy was justifiably angry; and their afternoon was not a success. Van Kull but set down Daisy at their door, returning; the child was in a bad temper; Dorothy's headache grew intolerable; she begged him (they had no engagement that night, and her health on such

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occasions was never good) to take his dinner at the Ocean House. They were going to have tea and go to bed at eight, she averred.

The weight of hopeless, irremediable loneliness settled down on Austin's soul. It was a relief, after dinner, as he sat smoking his cigar upon the vast veranda, to have a waiter bring a card to him: Mr Miles Breese. It had in one corner, "Columbian Club," and bore a delicate rim of mourning. Austin arose to greet its owner, who followed—a purple-veined, white mustached old man with a foggy voice—close behind.

"Ah, Mr Pinckney, how are you, how are you?" said the voice. "Any relation to the Pinckneys of South Carolina? Father? Indeed. Have heard of him, have heard of him—threw his life away—threw his life away. Well, some of us haven't done much better with ours; had a good time though, heh! heh! Be virtuous and you won't even be happy, my experience. Well, well—Mr. Gresham, who has been kind enough to act as my man-of-business—Have a drink?"

Austin, who wondered that Mr Gresham could stand being referred to in that capacity, declined.

"Well, well—I'm a Marylander myself, and I find— Waiter!— Nothing so good to talk business on as a little old Baltimore rye— Where was

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I? Oh, yes. Your Mr Gresham has been kind enough to look after my money matters— Necessary, eh? in these days— Our fortunes not what they used to be, we old families— An honest lawyer's the noblest work, as I say, of man! ha, ha! And your firm breeds 'em, by gad! I never ought to have left them. Did you ever hear of a man named Tamms?"

"I have," said Austin, somewhat startled.

"Or Markoff?"

"I have," said Austin, still more startled.

"Clean-cut young fellow—Harvard man, he says. Never had the advantage of a college education myself. Didn't care much for such things in the South before the war. Well, some of the fellows up at the club got to saying you ought to tie up to some pushing firm; railroad men, you know, put you up to things—make their fortune and yours, too—I don't mean points, but the real ground floor. You take the profit, and the other fellow keeps the stuff, you understand. And Markoff's sure to give me the straight tip, for he counts on me to put him up for the Columbian. Ever hear of the Allegheny Pacific?"

"Very lately," said Austin.

"Well, he got me an underwriting interest in their bonds and they haven't gone up as we expected.

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But he says they're all right, and it's not so much that as Allegheny Central——”

“Allegheny Central?”

“Old Baltimore property, you know. Stock's an heirloom in our best families—they never sell. But now Markoff—no, Tamms, it is—says it's going down. And I may say my whole fortune's in it. After all, the safest investment is the money you've spent!” And Mr Breese buried his red face in a goblet. “In these times it's safer to eat your cake than keep it.”

“But we—Mr Gresham——” Austin began.

“Well, it's not only, you see, that I've got to raise some money to take up these bonds, but, if Markoff's right, he's very kind to let me have the tip and get out of the Central stock before the others. And to raise all the money I need—my daughter's stock, Gresham insisted, should be put in trust—very natural, very proper—but he's my co-trustee.”

“I understand,” said Austin.

“She's with me now at the hotel— Gad, there's that girl again. Why, do you know her?”

It was Miss Aylwin, who, passing by them at the main door of the hotel—and they say it is not safe for the management of such a caravansary to permit of other entrances than the one front door—had, in seeing Austin, too obviously turned her face

away. This time she was dressed in a very becoming though modest evening gown; and another bunch of roses was at her breast. Austin would not lie; but, fortunately, on his keeping silent, Breese assumed a negative.

"I'd like to be the lucky dog who sends her those flowers every day," and the old man, with an alertness not to be expected from one of his years, made after her to the door, whence, after a fruitless glance down either hall, he returned with a sigh to order another whisky and soda.

"She comes here every summer for two weeks. The clerk tells me she is perfectly straight, and no one can find out anything about her. And she always has those flowers— Eh!"

Mr Breese started as a large, handsome figure emerged from the doorway he had just left. Again he rose, and this time Austin heard a hurried colloquy between them, the lady's tones the loudest. Then he came back, but made no offer to present him to the lady, though Austin could see, from the trembling of the diamond necklace that lay in her sumptuous figure, that she was offended.

"It is—er—Mrs Beaumont," said Mr Breese. "She does not live in the hotel, and I must escort her back—she was making a call on a friend. After all, I think we had finished our little talk."

"I think we had," said Austin dryly.

"Glad to meet you any time—in a social way——"

For one so versed in the ways of the world, Mr Breese got himself off rather awkwardly. The woman seemed nearly fifty, and was rouged and powdered. Austin watched the old man lay, with shaking fingers, a lace scarf around her monstrous bust, and then, as they got to the darkness of the sidewalk, give her his arm and march her hurriedly away. His own opinion of this latest specimen of the firm's clients was not free of some disgust.

XXI

THE following Sunday Austin did not get to Newport; he had to make a trip to a New Hampshire manufacturing village; and then, early in September, he had to make a longer journey, on the affair of a South Carolina railroad. Both experiences left a lasting impression. Nauchester, with its twenty mills and twenty thousand mill girls—a life gregarious, immodest—not, perhaps, immoral, but what was the sense of maidenly reserve in a hive of mill boarding houses, where twenty thousand healthy young women thronged the streets of

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a city with hardly as many score of men? To be sure, many of the girls were French Canadian; but many were American, girls from the hill towns in the neighborhood; and these, of all, were the loudest spoken, he observed, when he had the curiosity to visit, in the evening, one of the saloons they most frequented. The ten hours in the mill did not seem to have exhausted their vitality. The few other young men in the place, addressed by their nick-names and the subject of continual chaff, seemed cowed. They, the girls, were only eating ice cream, to be sure; though a couple of the boldest accosted him, wanting to know whether he would "shout" for "steins."

To Pinckney, a South Carolinian born with all a Jeffersonian's hatred of factory civilization, it all was horrible; the herded life, the miscegenation, as it were, of all personality, though all of one sex, seemed, to a born individualist, poisonous to the soul. Yet it may be doubted if the tariff only deserved the curse he mentally invoked upon it. The lonely social life of the agricultural New Hampshire town, unbraced, unguarded even by a Nauchester public opinion, had reached, perhaps, a baser domestic level. Nor, if we may trust Thomas Hardy's account of rural English Wessex, are things much better there. And in driving, on that afternoon, to the remote mountain water

power where the mill lay to which his business called him (a pretty white-painted hamlet, nestling amid green hills, with a sparkling white waterfall in the ferny gorge at its knees), he had been horrified at the information volunteered by the beardless young philosopher who drove his buggy. "Millsted," he had said, "is a good town; but in this place not a single girl is straight." For the life of him, Austin could not resist the question, Why? but the eighteen-year-old youth only shook his head. "Dunno," he answered, biting the rank cigar between his teeth. "In Millsted, they's mostly Catholic; here they're all American. There ain't no church nor justice, and so the fellows won't marry. You see it's boarded up." And the lad pointed to a dignified old white church that crowned the hill they were descending; the gilding was worn off the little belfry dome and a rude unpainted planking nailed across the doors.

Pinckney had passed the Sunday following again at Newport, hardly with pleasure to himself; and his wife had received with indifference the news that he must now be a fortnight in the South. And there, what a difference! He had the curiosity to visit, for the first time, his ancestral estate; it lay in a remote sea-cotton country, the low brick colonnaded house abandoned, the Ionic columns rotten, shutters hang-

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ing loose, the gardens a wilderness, the fish ponds green with scum. It had long since passed out of his family; but the offices, the negro quarters, were fully inhabited by the negroes, peasant proprietors now, healthy, rather insolent, sadly evident of a gradual sinking back to barbarism. Several families living together, it was hard to pick the husbands and the wives; and while the daughters were not as bold in manners as the Nauchester operatives, it was obvious that their print cotton wrappers (made perhaps in Nauchester) were worn for the sun's heat and not for modesty. Only one inhabitant—a white-headed old man who could remember his family and called him Mas'r—could be called civilized: he still had the education and the breeding acquired in slavery; and yet he told Austin he would not “go back.” No more, thought Pinckney, would the New Hampshire mill girl “go back” to the submissive domestic-servanthood of her maiden aunts. After all, who would not say that both were right? It is freedom that humanity must be tried in: humanity, purity, virtue must prove their godhead anew.

And then he came back North to that civilization which is, we suppose, the best; to that city which is the summer abode of those who are most fortunate; to the wife that his first youth had loved—and he was ashamed that he was not happy. Now came the time

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of his own vacation; three whole weeks he had with her—and he felt ashamed that he did not love her more! Not that he admitted this thought: he loved her, of course; more so, almost, when she seemed indifferent to him; more so, always, than she loved him; yet Austin did not deceive himself, he did not love her as he should. He had always been of opinion that a man was a poor cur who could not continue to love the woman he had made his wife; it was no excuse that her love for him was waning; the man was blameworthy in that he let it wane. And here was he, deficient in his own poor code!

It is true that the presence of her curious sister made it difficult to be expansive. And Dorothy persistently resisted his suggestion that Daisy might well now rejoin Mrs Somers, who was taking her to the Riviera for the winter, so that there was plenty for her to do at home. Killian Van Kull was still an assiduous visitor; but Dorothy seemed now convinced that her sister could have no expectations in that quarter. Meantime, it seemed almost as if she used her as a screen—to keep him off. For Austin was with them in the cottage now—he could not well have stayed three weeks at the hotel without their separation exciting comment—and her indifference to him was the more obvious that she had her moments of passionate surrender. She was apt to be

angry, almost repentant, after these, as if she had committed a wrong. He fancied she had a horror of maternity.

He could see, in other men's eyes, a horrible simulacrum of the spell she once had wrought with him. She was very different, dressed, and away from home. She was radiant, dazzling, on grand occasions—Mrs Rastacq's dinners, Mrs Gower's *bal poudré*, Jimmy de Witt's theatricals. Austin would sit opposite her and admit—intellectually—her charm. It was greater even than when he married her. Her charm had never been the attraction of the *ingénue*. As a maid she had been languid, awkward; but as a married girl her pallid beauty had the salt, the piquancy of a Marguerite—Gautier. It seemed to have a conscious malice: it was the eye that knew, the lips that hinted kisses. Men went crazy—men like Van Kull in particular—crazy about her. She was tingling with her successes, and did not half know why. In truth she was far more innocent than she seemed to them. And she had—as they would find if they ventured—a certain physical daintiness, an ermine-like shrinking from dirt—that might serve as well as modesty: rather a purity of body than of mind.

Morbidly, he studied her effect on other men—that physical beauty which no longer moved him.

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God! was this all his love had been? He watched her one night—it was at Mrs Gower's *bal poudré*—she was leaning, in a white brocade with small pale roses for a pattern, against a white pillar, her hair powdered white, yet none of all so white as her white skin, shown boldly against the white gown and the pale roses at her breast. Her little white slipper was tapping impatiently below her rose-silk ankle, and Van Kull was standing behind her. She had realized her ambition of being thin; and as Austin watched her, she bent her head; Van Kull looked at her. Puh! Had he, Austin Pinckney, ever looked like that? At her? At Mrs Rastacq, perhaps, that other night. Was his moral nature sinking? Was he but an animal, after all—unhappy, now that he had lost a mate? No, animals were true to their mates.

And Pinckney vowed to be true to her; and turned away, too proud to watch his wife, now that he was conscious he was doing it. He was far too proud to have any doubt of her mere fidelity. The Pinckney men were not in the habit of doubting their wives, and had seldom suffered for it. No, he felt it was himself that was at fault.

At four in the morning a footman found him and asked if he were Mr Pinckney? Madame had sent to find him. He followed. Dorothy was alone

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in a room opening into a tent upon the lawn; she looked nervous, almost as if she had been crying, and begged to go home! In the carriage she let him kiss her. And Austin prayed, that night, that he might—that they might—win their love again.

XXII

THE summer had not done much for Dorothy's health; she complained of being physically tired, and Austin volunteered to go home and open the house for her while she rested another week at Newport. He took Daisy on with him so that Dorothy for one week might be quite alone, as she had said she needed. He put his sister-in-law on the Pennsylvania train; and then set about getting servants for the empty house. For Dorothy, who was saving in such ways, had dismissed them all when she closed the house for the summer. He made quite a fête of getting the house ready, seeing that everything was swept and garnished, buying even some articles of old furniture that Dorothy had coveted in the windows of a shop on University Place. And when she arrived, one bright afternoon in early October, the house was spick and span and full of flowers. "It is good to be home," she said, and began

opening the pile of letters that lay on her dressing table. There did not seem to be anything of interest in them, for her spirits visibly fell. Austin proposed the theatre for the evening, but Dorothy was too tired.

The next day Austin had to make up for lost time at the office. The affairs of the Allegheny Central had come to the firm from another source than Mr Breese, and Austin was trying hard to find out what was really doing in that property. It was known that Phineas Tamms had acquired possession of a narrow-gauge line in eastern Ohio, running from Bellefontaine to the great trunk line, which he had now grandiloquently entitled the Allegheny Pacific, and was said to be changing its gauge; it was surmised that he desired to lease it to the Central, but he had no interest in the latter road, and, meantime, its stock still went down, down. True, the inspired financial papers that had advertised its bonds had pointed out that by constructing the Bellefontaine spur *westward* to a point where it met again the Allegheny Central on its northward curve, it might become part of a shorter line than any now existing between Baltimore and Chicago; but (as Mr Radnor said to their greatest client, Levison Gower, the railroad millionaire) “a fellow who had found a bung-hole might as well say, ‘Come, let’s build a barrel

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round it.' Allegheny Central is good enough for me." But "Lucie" Gower, who had an excellent head and whose judgment was taken in Wall Street with a respect that would have astonished the friends of his early days uptown, said again he didn't like it. "It had a kind of falling sickness." His own vast fortune was in the New York railroads, but his wife, through her old ownership of Starbuck Oil, had been always one of its largest stockholders. Yet very little was known of the real control; presumably it still rested in Baltimore, the birthplace of the vast enterprise.

Austin was still thinking of these things, and had just dismissed with a smile to his tired self the thought of asking direct of his old friend Markoff, when his wife met him at the door. Her animation had all returned. "See," she said, holding up a telegram. "An invitation from Mrs Gower to spend two weeks at Lenox." It ran:

"Can you and Mr Pinckney come up for two weeks? Private car leaves Grand Central at four on Friday. Do come, even if he can only take Sundays. Answer Flosheim." Flosheim—the name a barbaric compound of Flossie Gower's own creation—was her Lenox place. Their grand house was on the Hudson; but Lucie had recently purchased a small mountain in the Berkshires and given it to his

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wife. She had promptly taken out a fashionable architect and a New York landscape gardener, where, without, it would seem, a glance at the surrounding scenery, the one had leveled it off into *plate-bandes* and fish ponds with pergolas, and the other had constructed a marble reproduction of Azay-le-Rideau, looking about as appropriate amid the shaggy Appalachian forests as that smug, smart, modern band-box now planted amid the gray historic gothic of West Point.

"Dorothy, you are not going—so soon?" he could not help answering. She looked at him in amazement.

"Of course I am. Why, Austin, the mountain air is just what I need, after Newport. But you never want me to have a good time! And you must come, too. Why, Austin, Lucie Gower could make your fortune."

Austin looked as if he did not wish to have his fortune made that way. "I can't possibly come this week—or any day now but a Saturday to Monday——"

"Come next week, then. You see, Mrs Gower doesn't mind——" And Dorothy went off on the day following.

They had a belated hot spell that week, and Austin worked each day till his dinner, which he took,

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late and lonely, at the club. Sometimes, for the mere show of company, he would go to an Italian restaurant, where ladies also dined—mostly artists, singers, newspaper women—that world which owes a precarious subsistence (precarious in America) to the amusement of the rich. “Ze reech here in America are hard to amuse,” said a leading lady from the Odéon, that he met through her physician, a friend of his own. “Zey do not know enough.” For, although the ladies of their own world were, like Austin’s, out of town, at Tuxedo, in the Berkshires, or “entertaining” in their grand new places, their men—the money getters, bankers, lawyers, brokers, all but the most fashionable clergymen or doctors—were all now hard at work in the city. It was natural to foregather with clever women. So Austin would perhaps end the evening at some roof garden or smoking concert. He was too tired to think. Nay, he did not want to think. John Haviland tried to interest him in politics, in college settlements, in his Bowery clubs, in other wise civilizing missions. But Austin had recurred to his mood of Nauchester or South Carolina—he doubted if they had a pattern to civilize up to. He laughingly told John how his old negroes had solved the problem of “Civilization—its Cause and Cure”—and that the Nauchester mill girls were the product of free libraries. As for

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his politics (John was a Republican), he was a Demarch, not an Oligarch. But Haviland knew there was something behind all this. He told Brandon he was afraid that Austin was losing his grip; and the Major took it testily, as he always did any reference, however indirect, to Austin and Dorothy's affairs.

In truth, our hero was sick at heart. The world held out, not only no hope of joy—that perhaps were to be borne—but no faith in human hearts. The second week John, too, was away, and he worked the harder, interspersing his labors now and then with a dash to a summer theatre. He was just about up to the ethical ideals of the American vaudeville, he said to himself. One night Sammy Eckstein—the actors' lawyer, half in society, half among actresses, an odious beast he thought him—showed to him, with a grin, a copy of *The Town Woman*; it was at the Bohemian Club, where they took that paper. "Didn't know your wife was in the Berkshires."

"Didn't know you knew my wife at all." Austin was tired and out of temper

"Only as a public character," said Eckstein, and he tossed the paper to him. Austin read the paragraph at a glance before he crumpled up the paper in the wastebasket: "*The Inseparable Exclu-*

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sives.—At Flosheim, Mr Arthur Holyoke and Mrs ‘Baby’ Malgam; Mr ‘Tony’ Duval and Mrs Rastacq; Mr ‘Kill’ Van Kull and the new beauty ‘Dotty’ Pinckney. Mrs Gower’s unacknowledged cousin, ‘Mrs Beaumont,’ has to stay at Newport with Mr Breese.”

It was a simple piece of vulgarity; but Austin knew that the much-abused press is rarely vulgarly familiar with persons who do not vulgarly invite it. But he had thought Dorothy (no one ever called her “Dotty,” by the way) had meant to see no more of Van Kull.

When he came to Lenox, it was seven o’clock; he hardly expected to be met at the remote little station, but there seemed to be no public carriage there. Instead, it was Mrs Rastacq who called to him from a little phaeton and pair. “They’ve all gone off for the night,” she said. “And you’re to come with me. They’ve got you rooms at Curtis’s.” Austin, perhaps, looked puzzled. “They’ve gone on an all-night trip to the ice glen at Stockbridge. That is to say, they start right after dinner and take their supper with them; and Van Kull swears he means to show them the sunrise. Anyhow, you couldn’t possibly get nine miles to Flosheim before they start, and there’s no sense in your being there alone. So I said I’d take pity on you.”

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"But why aren't you with them?" Of course, he got in beside her.

"Oh, I don't play in Flossie Gower's menageries. Her hospitality is large, but I prefer my own *chez-moi*. Her tastes are too Catholic for me. She's got a Jew man with her. The fact is, I don't like her. She took a lover from me once."

It was more amusing, Austin reflected, than a roof garden, and he breathed deep of the bracing mountain air, while the pretty woman beside him handled cleverly her ponies. "I've taken a little cottage for three weeks, near the hotel, but I dine there. You can dine with me, if you like. I can hardly put you up at my cottage." Austin hastened to assure her that such had not been his hope. "Well, I think that Flossie Gower hoped I would."

They stopped at her house, and Austin went to the hotel, where, in incredibly few minutes, she reappeared clothed in a simple, almost girlish robe of white, high at the neck, a rose her only ornament. "I never like to dress for dinner at a hotel."

After dinner, Austin must go back "to smoke with her," as she said. She, too, took a cigarette; but otherwise, in appearance, she might have been a simple college girl, only that, as it grew cold in the night, she was less self-conscious than a college girl would have been of the manner of holding her

pretty ankles to the andirons. But she wanted a good long talk, she said, and would not let him go. She had told him that she wanted to talk to him about his wife, but she did not seem to get upon this subject. At midnight they went out to see the moon rise; they walked once or twice in the garden; then he must come back to have some Scotch and soda. After this he rose again to go. But she was talking of herself; and her manner had become sad. "I want to tell you something more—of what I told you at the ball. You have not wrecked your life, as I mine." And Mamie looked, in the dim lamplight, eighteen, as she spoke. "But I cannot bear you should think, as I know you do, it was Charlie Townley. We have been speaking of Lionel Derwent—you called his life a noble one just now. Well, I might have shared it—and I let it go." Mamie's dark eyes were full of tears.

Any man is moved at being made the subject of a woman's confidence—touched, if it be a sad one. Perhaps she meant him to take her hand and tell her so. It lay passive in her lap. She went on in low tones. She told him that her husband and she had nothing in common. One o'clock struck; two. She had a marvelous charm of voice—yes, of mind. It was a pleasure to be with her. After all, perhaps, pleasure was the only happiness. And as he once

more rose to go, she leaned forward slowly, looked up at him—and put up her lips for him to kiss them.

A moment later—after a long silence and a “forgive me”—Austin had flung from the house.

XXIII

A SENSE of horror at what he was doing had come over him, the night before, ere even the doing of it; and now, in the pure bright cool of the morning, an unspeakable sense of personal degradation. He had—what is not so rare with Americans, particularly those whose youth, with American moral standards, has been further protected by foreign conventions—not only an entire virginity of mind and body, but an entire respect for and confidence in gentlewomen of his class. To him the sex was divided into the two clear fields of black and white; and white was pure white, and black could be only black. And yet the horrible, sickening remorse he felt was due to no mere prudery, no Joseph-like standard of his own; it would have been no greater had the one kiss been followed by others; not the deed, but the fact that he could have done it, now distressed him. No crystal font might now

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wash the stain from his soul; he would be “unclean till evening,” aye, to the very evening of his life.

He was not a man who was deluded when judgment of his own self was concerned. Doubtless she had meant him to kiss her; but doubtless, also, he might not have done so. And with that unhappy self-consciousness that our too much reading throws over all events, even to the simplest, greatest moment of our lives, the surface thought too was grimly present to wonder at the difference he had found—was it in him or her?—in their case from that of Tristan’s or of Paolo’s. Mamie’s kiss (and she had kissed him) had been as elemental, as intoxicating to his senses (we have said he was a man) as Brunhilde’s or as Iseult’s—and yet her very lips had left on his the quiver of his own contempt. (It may have been—who knows?—this very quality of his that had been to Mamie the perverse attraction; certainly it was not commonly believed among her friends that she would go so far; the *cœur de femme*, as the French novelist still calls it, is a strange thing.) Had it been followed with the consequences of an Yseult’s or a Francesca’s—even of his own when, that day long gone, he had kissed his wife, then the betrothed of another—it would have seemed to him that morning no more wicked, only less vulgar.

A “bounder”—even a Joseph—might have also

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regretted the way he had flung out of the house. This indeed would have been the first remorse of a Frenchman. Even an Irishman poetizes somewhere about "the un-kissed kiss." Austin wasted no remorse on this point; if you are bolting from a lady's house, any way is the best way. He recognized that Mamie might think him a fool—might think him a cad; both positions he accepted with other incidents of the night's work. Nor, in any Joseph Surface's way, did he condemn her. He had let his eyes linger on hers, he had flirted with her at the ball, he had let her talk to him of his wife—by all the free lance's code he had showed himself fair game. Moreover she had given him fair warning. Her husband was a decayed old roué and she amused herself—nay, it were fairer to say *interested* herself—in life that way. Many an old man keeps himself young by his interest in young women; why not she by hers in men? She was lonely enough; she never pretended to be better than the average. Of course she would hate him. (As a matter of fact, Mamie did nothing of the sort; rather felt she justified in her little liking for him; it had begun with malice, ended in liking. She was by no means evil, though enjoying the appearance of it; and she loved him for running at her approach—that way. She now really began to love him a little; there was henceforth a bit of

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the maternal in it; anyhow, it is not the love of such as Mamie that hurts; they do not do their harm by loving. As for remorse—does a woman ever feel remorse at a kiss, taken and given? Curious, all the novelists—women novelists, licensed revealers of a woman's heart and head, high priestesses of feminine subtlety—have never vouchsafed to tell us such a simple fact as this. "*La femme ne se révèle pas.*" Mamie recognized that for the present she must avoid him; for all the future, she supposed, he would avoid her. She thought no worse of him for that. Rather was she rejoiced that she had met with such a man. *Bon enfant*—was Mamie; a manly little woman. And that foolish, fire-playing wife of his! Mamie only played with fire in others. Even with Austin, it may be surmised, had there been a crackle, the wet blanket had been ready.)

But to Austin's mind, as he walked, sick at heart, all these things were unknown or lightly touched upon. The bare, beast fact remained. He made no effort at sleep; an ice-cold bath, a cigar, another bath when he rose from his lounge and dressed, and then by sunrise he was in the stable seeking for a horse to carry him away.

XXIV

NO Tannhäuser coming out upon the morning mountain could have been less intoxicated, more repentant of the night. It seemed as if the very autumn woods, the leafy brown dells of the brooks, the very flowers by the wayside, could never look the same to him. Berkshire was crimsoned with the same glory that he remembered there, when he had brought his bride, four years before. In what altered heart was he going to meet her now! And he remembered with a shudder the kiss that he had given her upon that ride. How little, after all, his kisses meant! or was it that he—Pinckney repressed this thought, as one drops a stone back on the curling worms of earth.

As he mounted the Taconic range, the green Stockbridge meadows opened out below; a healthy brown brook crawled, clear as smoky crystal, at his feet; a minute more and he plunged, with the sense of an asylum, into the shaggy forest. When he came out, it was upon the formal, conscious gardening of Mrs Gower's demesne. The dressed-up flower beds, the artificial play of water, the naked little cupids on the balustrades, out of place enough even in that season, for once seemed less intolerant

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of his mood; so the liveried groom that took his horse, the blue and silver-laced footman who led him, through a hall suggesting *bals poudrés*, with its white furnishing and light-lived Boucher panels, to his room. The huge Fragonard on the stairs had for its theme two powdered *abbés* swinging a maiden in a low dress, and contemplating, with a delight that made the *motif* of the picture, her generous calves. Austin reflected on the probable ideals of a household brought up upon this picture; how grotesque his self-abasement would have seemed to them, the two *religieux*. To him, however, it was none the less.

No one was up yet in the great house. Another footman, this time in morning black, brought him coffee in his room, and told him they had not come back till after sunrise. The man unpacked his valise while he took his coffee. "Mrs Pinckney's room is at the end of the entry, sir." Austin dismissed the man, saying he would not disturb her; then he made an entire change in his clothing, as if to remove the day before yet one stage farther off. Then he started for a long tramp up the mountain.

Coming back, it was after noon; but he found his wife still at her dressing table, the maid adjusting finishing touches to her breakfast gown. Regardless of her presence his wife put up her lips to

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be kissed; he pretended not to notice it. "I hope you're not still cross," she said.

"Cross?" Austin felt that he could not "make up" in the presence of the maid.

"You were when I left, you know." Austin gave a brief account of his doings for the past two weeks, and asked for hers. "Oh, not much—the usual thing."

"And was the—nocturnal picnic a success?" Humble enough he felt, God knows, yet could not keep the tone of criticism from his voice.

"The greatest possible fun. It was all Van Kull's idea and he was delightful."

"I thought, Dorothy dear, you had come to my opinion of that man." He spoke with all possible gentleness; but, turning angrily to the maid, she bade her hurry; then spoke to him coldly: "Your opinions are peculiar. You don't ask me mine of Mamie Rastacq. She was to meet you, he told me—you dined with her, I suppose?"

"I dined with her," said Austin in measured words, "and passed the evening with her." He felt a strong impulse to be wholly truthful to his wife; had the maid not been there, he might have told her all.

"Oh, I don't care if you passed the night with her." The maid stopped brushing. "Dorothy!"

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was all that he could say. And so their meeting ended. Was this the young girl he had known four years before? The coarse thought—the even coarser voicing of it! Yet what was he that he should reprove her for it? He walked softly back through the long hall, before the Fragonard, down the marble steps, and sat in a shaded alley in the garden. This was the nature formed by the life his wife was leading; this, perhaps, what he, too, was coming to. And again that sense of intolerable personal degradation made him wish that ten years of his life might roll by before he faced his work again.

A servant announced lunch, and he saw all the party assembled. A feeling as of burnt-out fireworks was in the air; the women were all tired, the men silent, if not cross. Flossie Gower alone was in her element. It seemed she had not gone to the picnic, but had come down fresh and spent the morning gleaning, from the jaded participants, of each the other's adventures. At nearly fifty, Mrs Gower's only passion was art; but she lived, like a parasite, upon the passions of others. Tell Mrs Gower that two people were in love, and she would have them at her house parties; good-naturedly, she liked even making engagements; but she enjoyed it more when they were married; enjoyed it most, as being more complicated and full of tragic possibility, if

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one were married and the other not. Flossie now fancied herself like an Este woman of Ferrara; anyhow she was quite assured such great dames stood above morality. Secreting some such thought, she looked around her table. The company were rather too wonted. There was Killian, of course—but it was the usual thing; she had asked for him a young girl of twenty, Miss Hope, of Providence, a lovely gentle blonde with five millions, looking as if butter would not melt in her mouth—and he would not look at her. She was too marriageable. Then there was Arthur Holyoke—but he was fat and bespoke, and it was only Pussie De Witt, besides. There was Tony Duval, but he frankly avowed his preference for women of another world. She looked at Austin more hopefully. Would he not go fetch Mamie Rastacq? She was coming that day to dinner. “I am not good enough for her to sleep here,” she laughed. But Austin had promised to go to Lee with Mr Gower. Dorothy had a headache and would not go with anybody. Holyoke and Mrs De Witt were paired; Van Kull had secured the dogs and a gun for partridges; so all the fun that Flossie got was seeing Tony left to the schoolgirl. And Lucie, who would have blocked a tête-à-tête with Killian, let them go. He knew there was no harm for her in Tony. Tony only stooped to conquer—he never aspired.

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Mr Gower surprised Austin by his interest in the country, in the country people. Mrs Gower treated them as a peasantry, a fact that Lucie seemed conscious of; the men he met, good farmers, substantial yeomen many, he all called by name; some even were Tom or Bill to him. "The fact is, we rich people at Lenox do a great deal of harm," he said; "first, at playing at gentry with them, lastly, I'm afraid, by their accepting it." And Austin thought the remark profound. "We should remember that these Massachusetts countrymen have not in three hundred years accepted social superiors, and it's only the brute force of money that bends them to it now."

There was a something kindly, sympathetic about Mr Gower that seemed to bring, in some unexplained manner, its balm to Austin's sore self-consciousness. In the course of the drive he said some pleasant words about Austin's wife; and Austin felt assured that here was a friend, and a friend who was no fool. But who else was there in that household he could trust?

Coming home for a late tea, they found that many of the women had already gone up to dress; for the Austrian Ambassadress had arrived, and something very splendid in the line of toilet was expected that night. On the other hand, Mrs Ras-

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tacq had telephoned her indisposition. Austin found his wife arrayed in her most open gown and contemplating mutinously the three ropes of modest pearls around her pretty neck. "You should see her diamonds," she said. And indeed it was fortunate she had them on, for, when Austin found himself on the left of the Ambassadors at dinner (for Mrs Gower had chosen to dazzle her youngest man by this close proximity) he could see upon her bosom nothing else, while her back was literally naked to the waist. Yet, thought Austin, how obvious the expert is beside the novice! The Ambassador (she was a real Ambassador, for Carolyi, her husband, was accredited to the Court of St. James and only in Washington upon a special mission) was a professional; beside her all the other women, save Flossie Gower herself, appeared as amateurs. She came from a Continental air where it was frankly recognized that, as men "got on" by their intellect, so women must get on, and their own wives must get them on, by their charm. And charm and physical allurements become, to the elderly diplomat, synonymous. His, to conceal the truth, hers, to reveal it, she laughed. Countess Carolyi was said to have the most beautiful torso in Europe; so just as frankly as he contributed his wit and brains to the dinner table she contributed her undraped figure, with no more thought of any

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indecentcy in her display than in his. Austin, who was the only man at the table whose French was beyond criticism, talked volubly with her in that language; and, for the first time since their marriage, his wife felt rather proud of him. And Austin, perhaps, began to wonder whether, after all, he was not morbid.

They were to have left the next morning, but, after a fruitless expostulation on Austin's part, conducted at his wife's bedside at the hour of her retiring, Dorothy had decided to stay on. Austin's tone was not affectionate, only appealing, and Dorothy was fond of announcing that she was led by the affections, not to be driven by any taskmaster. Austin (wisely enough, any man of the world might say) had not decided to confide in her, or it all might have ended with her arms around his neck. He felt that he could not go to her so fresh from the other woman's kisses. So, after a quarter of an hour, he left her prevailing; and the demure French maid, waiting outside, gave him a curious look as he passed to his room. Had the Major been there, he would have groaned, "You should have made her come." But to Austin's Southern chivalry was added now his shame.

So he stayed on the next day, but in a savage mood; a mood in which a man laughs at consequences;

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a mood in which a man may go to the devil. His wife was off with Van Kull; so he challenged the Austrian lady to a drive, and found her, to his amusement, most definitely aware of the conventional boundaries, and insistent (as perhaps became an Ambadress) at the very *punctus* of the frontier line—in *voies-de-fait*, that is: her speech was free. Then at dinner he took too much champagne, did not sleep, and at dawn found himself in a wave of self-contempt again. That night he took his leave; Gower, who seemed to have some curious divination of the situation, telling him simply (as was always Lucie's way) that he would take care of his wife.

In the city, in the honest workaday world, his sanity returned, but with it his sense of degradation. Nor was there meaning in the world, sympathy in things human, or sense of things divine. Work, work, work, the only panacea; work, work, work, for what end? His wife would bear no children; he no longer loved his wife. It degraded them both to live together. Pah! who was he to talk of degradation? He owed her a duty, if not a reparation. What he had given her was never love. She wanted money; well, he would try to get it. For him, life held out nothing.

There was still too much ego in his cosmos, thought

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John Haviland, and was disturbed about his friend. But even Grace, with all her gentle comprehension, had ceased to soothe. The strong man was like an angry child. He worked like a machine all day and, as John fancied, half the night; for when he would even come to dine with them, he cut short his cigar and hurried home, as one who has left a job unfinished. He would drink nothing. And Grace fancied sadly what the half-made lonely home in Eleventh Street must be; the days so going by, and Dorothy not coming back.

Pinckney had had a passion for music; one day, pathetically as Grace Haviland thought, he complained to her that it no longer spoke to him; so they persuaded him to come to lunch, one Sunday, and go to a special rendering that was to be given of *Tristan*, third act, and the Ninth Symphony. Strange tones to be thus coupled together, Austin thought. The only other person present was to be a great friend of Grace's, Miss Ravenel. Her mother, Mrs Breese, had taken her own mother's name. Yes, she was indeed the daughter of old Miles Breese, John said; the only daughter; after the only son had died, her mother had got her divorce; and to be near him (for his life made it quite impossible she should be with him, of which luckily the poor loyal child was ignorant) she sup-

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ported herself in the winter, in New York, by giving lessons. "Poor girl," said Austin, remembering what he had seen at Newport.

It was the Sunday; and with all his trouble, Austin had no heart for church. Had he done so, it being the twenty-first Sunday after Trinity, he might have heard a word to his address—a collect asking only for pardon and peace and, all sins cleansed, to serve God with a quiet mind—but still on that morning, near the thirtieth year of his life, Austin had not, not even more than Dorothy, been led to the thought of simple service. Instead, the cloud of his sin uncleansed was on him and he fought, manlike, against it with the legs of a horse—riding far out into the Westchester highlands and returning at dusk through the softly freezing streets unassuaged. As the soon sun set in its burnished stillness, already wintry, his horse came to a walk. To-day, at last, it seemed to him as if the peace of God might be on earth for others if not for him. He had come to the thought of "service"—but not yet of the "quiet mind."

He was late and dressed hurriedly, but was at John Haviland's for the early dinner. In the dusk of the narrow New York drawing-room a slender black figure rose to greet him. "Grace is not down yet," she said simply. "I am Mary Ravenel." She

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was a very beautiful young girl, and as Austin looked at her, perhaps too earnestly, it was evident that she, at least, had a quiet mind. Their talk at dinner was of real things—unheard since many weeks by Austin—John Haviland, principally of the way to combat socialism on the stump; Miss Ravenel, of its effect upon the ideals of the very poor. It appeared (as Grace told Austin later) that besides her paying classes about half her work was done for love. For a young girl of twenty, she seems strangely mature, thought Austin; and he stopped his own, to hear her thoughts instead. But when both he and John so stopped, she became suddenly shy and reddened slightly, as any girl might.

At the Metropolitan, where they had a box, the light was dim, and Austin caught himself watching the young girl's profile. It was a Sunday night audience, so they could, fortunately, listen. Austin noticed that she was not so much moved by Tristan. The long, lonely invocation of the loyal Kurwenal—the iterated, weeping cadences of the lonely sounding horn—still the sea is empty—moved her a little; the sad echoes of the joyous arrival song in Cornwall long ago, at last the great cries of the dying hero, she heard with parted lips. And then *Sie kommt! Sie kommt*, a sail! His own heart leaped within him

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as it had been wont, at those marvelous joy notes, to leap in his dreaming youth.

Austin suddenly started at the thought that his music was coming back to him: and this was now made sure. For Yseult's death chant, joyously surmounting, slow, quiet in beginning, then swelling to the passion of the joy of death—suddenly tingled in his eyelids; thank God! he felt, still tears were there. But she, her clear eyes seemed untroubled still—she did not understand—this Euthanasia of elemental love, unchristian, unconfined in duty.

It was Beethoven (he could see) that touched her heart. Here was the love divine; here was the joy of life. Not joy alone in death; in life, as the God of Christ hath willed. Here was no pagan frenzy; sane and normal, yet infinite as the human soul, he heard, as he watched her face, the mighty climax of the last movement swell until the poet's ecstasy breaks into human voices and the joy of heaven stands revealed to earth.

They walked home, saying very little; and then Austin found the way none too long to Eleventh Street. Thank Heaven for its music! It had stanchd his wounds; his sins, though scarlet, might yet be as the wool; his soul once more be shriven. And Austin, that night, again prayed: for himself, for his wife. No more the dreadful sense of degra-

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dation was present ; it had been, it should be no more. It was God's music had done this : that night at last, no longer conscious of his shame, of his despair, of his selfish sorrows—but only of

“ L'Amor che muove il sol' e gl'altre stelle.”

BOOK TWO

*“Vuolsi così colà dove si puote
Ciò che si vuole. . . .”*—Dante.

XXV

THOSE who have ever had a vital illness may remember how, on the morning of the day that it came on, there was a curious tremor in the sky, a curious unreality in the apperceptions of things on earth. It is as if the pulses, conscious of the coming evil, seek to weave their web across realities as the gauze veil is drawn across the scene in a stage play. So, with increasing fever, the mists grow thicker before the patient's eyes, until, with the coming of night again, comes the full delirium that may be the end. For of such stuff are dreams, but all our life is rounded with them.

And the next day the great city was veiled in snow. Like a bride—or better, like a penitent woman at her next communion—in the snow she knelt shriven of her sins. But above, the vault of our Western blue sparkled, glorious, golden—one cannot forget Poe's immortal collocation—and to Austin the air of this Monday morning blew like a bugle call. It was a day, for him, of glorious battle: in the highest tribunal of the land but one, he was to argue a cause in which (as is not, despite the cynic critics of his calling, always the case in lawsuits) the Right was imperiled: it was a question of a wife,

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deserted by her husband, mother of his children, now confronted with the loss of heritage and home at the greed of his latest mistress, setting up, after his death, a South Dakota divorce. Pinckney, amid the definite miseries of the last few days, had counted not the least that he had felt himself unworthy, in his state of mind and heart, to champion these lists. Fortunately, to-day, the wonderful air was to his nerves like wine; the mists of yesterday had vanished at the northwest wind; in his head there rang unwonted music—his old favorite of all, Palestrina's hymn of Victory, and then again (as he had seen them through the night) the choruses of the Ninth Symphony, like visions of angels "in strong, level flight." And in the court he pleaded against the constitutional State right of South Dakota to grant divorces (well argued by Markoff on the other side), the higher constitutional, even the sovereign—nay, the human—right of the people of New York to speak, through her laws, for purity of life, to strengthen the steps of her citizens in Christian living, to sanctify by irrevocable vows the surrender of the maiden, reward the truth of the wife, protect the mother of her children in her honesty and in her home. And when Austin had finished, the presiding justice, a member of the highest earthly court, called him to the bar and publicly compli-

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mented him; and even Markoff, rolling up his papers, knew that he was worsted, and felt little confidence even in his last appeal, by writ that "error had been done," to the Supreme Court of the United States.

Going back to his office, Austin found Mr Gresham awaiting him. Some kindly impulse made him stop and say a word to Miss Aylwin, as he went by the outer room. She flushed and colored and spoke for a moment brokenly. Austin wondered if she had been fearful, doubting what he might tell about their meeting at Newport; it was true, he had not found occasion to speak to her since. How heedless we are of the sensitiveness of others, in our hurry, in our consciousness of general good intention! Why, Austin felt, he had no more doubted Miss Aylwin than—than anyone. He was sorry for her; the world presented so hard a side to her gentle beauty; even if she only went there for her pleasure. Mr Gresham complimented Austin on his success, of which he had already heard; even Judge Blandford had thought it worth while to telephone him a message of congratulation.

"He has no doubt of the decision and says there's no chance of a reversal."

"Or *certiorari*?"

"They'll never grant it, after two findings on

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the facts. But I want to talk about Allegheny Central——”

“I had some talk about it with Mr Breese at Newport——”

“Mr Breese is a very small factor at present. Our duty is toward a larger public. The stockholders have formed a protective committee, which we represent. Now, you know young Markoff, and I know his client, Mr Phineas Tamms. They claim that he has secured control.”

“Can he have?”

“I don’t see how it’s possible. The stock is in the strong boxes of the widows and orphans of Baltimore and Philadelphia—or should be. That time in the panic when the Starbuck oil plant was burned must have taught them a lesson. Even then, Wall Street dealt largely on paper. It would have troubled Deacon Remington at any time to deliver all the stock he sold. But Tamms has got himself elected president. And Chestnut Street and South Street are shaken to their foundations.”

“Haviland’s house has connections there,” said Austin. “I’ll ask him.”

“No use of asking Markoff, I suppose?”

“I knew him at college,” said Austin dryly.

“I sent for Tamms to come to this office yester-

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day. He didn't dare not come. There was a rumor that they were about to issue twenty millions of preferred four per cent stock, ostensibly for the purchase of his Allegheny Pacific—the old Bellefontaine branch.”

“He undoubtedly owns that,” said Austin.

“Of course it would render the old common stock—it has paid its eight per cent for forty years—almost valueless. I told him that it would be a fraud, a moral fraud——”

Austin bit his lip at the adjective. “And what did he say?”

“He said that he was acting in everything under the advice of counsel.”

“Suppose he only leases his road—for four per cent on twenty millions,” said Austin. “Where are we better off?”

“A lease can be enjoined—a lease can be annulled. Whereas the stock once issued—in the hands of the innocent purchaser——”

“Oh, the innocent purchaser,” said Austin. He had a letter in his pocket from Dorothy; it did not tell him much about her affairs, but said that Mark-off—to her evident surprise—had come to be of the house party. He was *much* improved. And he had told her that Allegheny Pacific, then selling in the twenties, was bound for a great rise.

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“Can’t you make it worth your while to go on to Baltimore?” said Gresham, as Austin followed out his own reflections.

But he did not want to go to Baltimore just then. “I’ll see Haviland first.”

“Thank you,” said old Mr Gresham, always deferent of others. And Austin, modestly conscious that he had earned his afternoon, took the train for a little place he knew in the lower Hudson Highlands. He felt a sort of youthful Siegfried hunger for more achievement. Bars of the joy of Beethoven still were ringing in his sky. At Alpine he left the train and enjoyed a furious tramp through the already crisp snow, through the pine woods, above the Palisades, in sunset, and in twilight, and in evening. At last, he came out upon the cliffs opposite New York. It was ebon night; but above the great city the stars faded in the glare of its own electric lights. Its myriad little window lights—domestic, these—twinkled faintly, like the softer radiance of the Milky Way, lost in the planetary blaze. He tried to make out the neighborhoods—there, of course, was the Madison Square tower, an easy point to start from. Above, on Murray Hill, Park Avenue, was John Haviland’s; below, in the very center of the island, his own house; it would now be dark. He wondered where— Suddenly, far to the east, in the

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rising moon, he noticed the silver shining of the Sound.

To-night there was nothing for him but the club. He felt too young for its repose, too intolerant of its tattle. What did other people do who must have lonely evenings? The Hoboken ferryboat was full of happy young people going to the play: he took pleasure in their pleasure; was it not well earned? They had done their daily labor; so had he. And now, man and maid, they were seeking that drama which perhaps was never to be theirs; the world to them, of romance—the Play—or even if but pleasure, what harm? A fairy spectacle may be ideal enough to one who has had to bend her steady eyes, eleven hours, above one part of one machine. Austin loved to look at them. Then, too, there was the working suburban with his wife, going, these, too, to the play, citizens, fathers, and thoughtful voters we may hope; and going each with his own wife—not as it would have been in Mrs Gower's circle, which looked down on them and called them "commuters" contemptuously— The term had been invented by the cynical *Sun*, but had been adopted with enthusiasm by that set who, perchance, living themselves in flats, hovered from New York to Newport or to Aiken or to Monte Carlo—who would have invited a dago princelet before Ben Franklin to their draw-

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ing-rooms — hired, these latter, at a restaurant. Commuters, forsooth! American householders—as for Mrs Gower and her set, they were—what was the old English term? *Potwallopers*—and Austin laughed at the phrase, and saved it up for Lucie, when he should see that honest fellow again—only T. Levison-Gower, despite his name, parted in the middle, as the vernacular goes, was no “potwalloper,” but a full-bred American citizen, his roots planted firmly in the soil of Berkshire County, Mass. “Potwalloper”—a man who boiled his pot in a city once a year and therefore claimed the right of free-man there. John Haviland was no potwalloper. The worst, perhaps, he knew was old Antoine Rastacq—born heaven knew where, he owned estates in Greece, was bred in Pau and Newport—his kingdom, not in heaven, nor, any longer, in his restless wife’s heart— Shuffling still, with his locomotor ataxia, to each fashionable ball, making a collection of the portraits of pretty young girls— How his wife must now despise him—and Austin had a moment’s understanding even of poor Mamie—of her hatred of him, barbed with the knowledge of evil he had taught her, of her self, cynically, like some Kundry, testing, for their like knowledge, the souls of men.

No, he could not stand the club to-night. Why

had he not a club upon the Bowery, like John Haviland? John was possibly there to-night; if he only knew where it was, he would go there too. It was too soon to call, after his dinner. Not, indeed, that before this he had ever cared how often he called upon John Haviland. Why would not Dorothy take some interest in the life, the real life, of her adopted city? It was to be her home. Why would she not cultivate the Havilands and not Van Kull?

Van Kull, in another ten years, would almost be another Tony Rastacq, American as he was. He was acquiring the horrible, the un-American way, of love affairs with young girls—this Austin knew, from the Major, who made his text of Daisy. Handsome as his lost face was, it was growing yet more evil. He was now more to be found at Narragansett, or even at Watch Hill or such unexplored resorts—the girls at Newport were too knowing for him, he said—and the grim truth that clothes the words of Mephistopheles through the Faust lay in this speech—for, as he grew old, his pleasures must be stronger. He needed now the spice of sin. He liked to dazzle young girls (and our yellow press sees to it that America is not without innocent young girls who can be dazzled by such as he)—he would pick one out for the summer, dazzle her, intoxicate her, perhaps compromise her if he could—not girls

in his own class, perhaps. So much the fouler play! The Major had told Austin this, it was no jest, he said, and the young Carolinian had said (it was no jest either) he would like a chance to kill him. Possibly Van Kull saw this (not, to do him justice, that he would much have cared) and for the nonce relaxed his pursuit of silly Daisy.

But to-night Austin could see some good in all men—all, anyhow, but Van Kull—certainly in all women. The passion of his own remorse had purged his nature; with the shriving came the great compassion for the sinning—the infinite compassion of the pure. To his dear wife he had been hard—narrow, boy-man-like. His nature was larger now.

Must it be that a man must sin to be redeemed? That, surely, is not true of women. Yet the stories of Senta, of Tannhäuser—yes, even of Dante and of Shakespeare—would hint at some such truth. But Austin felt nobly confident his wife had never sinned. He would go home and write to her.

It was a long, affectionate letter. He insulted her with no word of Van Kull—wrote much and earnestly of her hoped-for home-coming, and closed with a laughing reference to her desire to speculate. The brougham should be hers, he bade her hope; he had won, he felt sure, a great case that very day. As for Markoff, he doubted that young Hebrew's real

desire to make their fortune. It was not for his own *beaux yeux*—since when had she so smiled upon him?

A thought occurred to him, and he wrote a word to Lucie Gower. He was interested too; and he owed him a bread-and-butter letter anyhow. He spoke a word of his hospitality, and of Dorothy's enjoying it so long. He mentioned Markoff's "tip." Then he turned again to his letter to her and added a word of endearment and lay down to a dreamless sleep. Well earned—for one who had argued a national case, tramped twenty miles through winter snow, and sat till after midnight writing letters!

Two days after this Austin got two telegrams. One was from Lucie (he had not credited him with so much learning), "*Timeo hebraos nec dona ferentes*," the other from his wife, "Am coming home tomorrow," and Austin rushed out to buy flowers for her.

XXVI

WHEN Dorothy came in, her first glance, which Austin, busy with the things in the carriage, did not see, was for the card tray. Then she sent the maid for a tea gown and bade her undo her boots. The girl stood irresolute until a petu-

lant command from Dorothy brought her to her knees. "Now carry the boots upstairs. I really must have a maid to myself. Ann is only fit to scrub floors."

"Does that come before the brougham?" smiled her husband.

"Every other woman at Flosheim had a maid with her. They could wear a dozen fresh waists a day, if they chose. *You* look flourishing enough!"

"I've been working very hard."

"Well, Mr Markoff has his brougham and everything else and yet *he* seems to find some time for society."

"Did you ask him to come to your Fridays this year?"

"My Fridays were ridiculous—it's silly for us to try to entertain in this house. Oh, he hadn't a word to throw at me; I'm not good enough for him now. All the eyes he had were for Mrs Gower."

"Perhaps he was there on business," suggested Austin.

"No, for Mr Gower didn't want him. He snubbed him terribly. Markoff wanted to be introduced to Countess Carolyi, and Mr Gower wouldn't."

"Perhaps *she* wouldn't. Austrians are full of prejudice. My sisters——"

"Oh, I'm tired of hearing about your sisters—I

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should think you had thirty instead of three." She spoke before the maid, and Austin was silent; but was sure that he could not remember when he last had spoken of his family. Dorothy bade the maid remove her dress and then adjust the gown, holding up her arms—and Dorothy was proud of her arms, still so frail and girlish—as she did so. Austin did not like this habit, acquired from Daisy in their contracted lodgings at Newport, of dressing all about the house; but he had made a resolve no more to reprove his wife. Instead, when the maid had gone, he kissed her; and she looked a shade less fretful.

And now the callers and the dinner invitations began. Every night they went out to dinner—she was always calling in the afternoons—and pretty soon there were dances too; for Dorothy never refused an invitation (except to accept a better one), and (moreover, having an attractive husband) such young people are in demand. If only we had that mad desire to feed the poor we have to feed the rich! The only invitations she would not accept were the Havilands'—and Petrus Gansevoort's, of course; they were asked once—to a grand ball he was giving in the Fifth Avenue palace—but probably by mistake. Dorothy rather accentuated the breach; she was quite aware of the vogue she had enjoyed in her first win-

ter as "the girl who had run away from Pete." She was fond of saying such things as "Oh, there is Mrs Gansevoort—I can't go in with her." But she said that Gracie Haviland did not like her, so Austin had to take his dinners there alone, when her evenings, as sometimes happened, were filled without him. But, as the years went by, she found it rather a nuisance never to go to the Gansevoort balls.

Meantime Austin's growing interest in his profession absorbed him more and more. And he was also resolved to strike his roots more deeply into the city's life. What John Haviland could do, what Lucie Gower could do, what Mary Ravenel could do, surely he could do. He began to study John's clubs and classes in the Bowery. Leaving there after dark, one Friday afternoon, Haviland asked him to walk down to Rivington Street. "Miss Ravenel has a late class to-day, and I always like to walk home with her if it's after dark."

"Do you mean she walks all alone from Rivington Street?"

"It's not that neighborhood I mind—to begin with, she has lived there, months at a time, and almost everyone knows her. But I never heard of a lady, on her business, being insulted on Rivington Street. It's Twenty-third Street, and Fifth Avenue, where that danger is."

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“It is a long walk,” said Austin gravely.

“She is too poor to take a carriage.”

Austin thought of his wife's new brougham, just chartered for the winter, and the horse idle in his stable, for it was her “at home” day, but the vision was dismissed with a sigh. Anyhow, he would not on that day be wanted at home. So he swung his stride to Haviland's.

To use up the time they walked through Centre Street, passing by the Tombs. Austin looked at the dignified old portal to the dolent city; it was the first time he had seen it; his clients were not of that class. John spoke a word to a plainly dressed old woman who just then issued from the Egyptian pylon. Austin looked on; perhaps his curiosity appeared; for John said, “That is Mrs C.—they call her the Tombs Angel.” And they were still talking of her when they met Miss Ravenel.

“I hear so much of her from friends—from my girls who have friends in trouble. I can only work among the good, you know,” she said, with a sudden shy smile to Austin.

“And better you should,” growled Haviland. “And if anyone can keep them good, you and Gracie can. Besides, they see you do it.”

Miss Ravenel's smile rippled frankly into laughter. “Lessons in the arts of virtue, with practical

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demonstration, as they say in colleges! What prigs you make us seem!"

"Did you go to college, Miss Ravenel?" asked Austin.

"No, I didn't. I lived alone in the country, with my grandmother, in Maryland. But my coming-out year I came to New York."

"And came out in the slums," laughed John.

"Not in the least," laughed the girl. "I went to Mrs Gansevoort's ball and to Mrs Rastacq's reception before I sank to my natural level. Don't you believe him, Mr Pinckney; Mr Haviland 'doesn't move in my circles,' that's all." But Austin did not heed her; the words about Mrs Rastacq had struck his chest like a bullet.

"You emerge occasionally—I have met you at dinners," continued Haviland.

"Only that I may study the customs of my betters. All my working girls model themselves on the Four Hundred, you know. Come, this is Tompkins Square, and we are not of the Four Hundred. I always have a race here, when it's dusk." Except in the paths, the snow of the little park was quite untrodden, and the benches were empty. Like an Artemis she bounded forward, the men after her. John, with his fifty years, soon fell behind; but Austin barely kept with her until, on the other side, she

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sank breathless into a seat. From her rosy face the laughing, direct eyes looked out at Austin, and he noticed—not their color, which was indescribable, but that they were very gentle and yet their glance was clear and brave. Their color, indeed, like a deep mountain tarn hidden from all wind, was misty gray or blue as the light took it. As she sat there she looked the picture of health; and Austin was glad to notice it, for the other day he had fancied her delicate.

“What is the hardest?”

“The hardest thing I find?” Miss Ravenel grew quickly serious. “To keep them from copying the wrong models—and to make them see the right ones. Women of the really *grand monde*—what I call it—are not portrayed in the newspapers.”

“And what *you* call the *grand monde* is the universe—God’s world.”

She darted a quick glance of approval. “And all humanity’s,” she added. “Women like Gracie Haviland, for instance. They are not advertised. Work girls cannot imagine them; they have to meet them. And then it takes an education to appreciate them. Whereas women like——”

“Like Mrs Rastacq, for instance.” Austin said it with a gulp.

“Oh, they are easy to copy.”

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“I wish I could do something of the kind—like Mr Haviland,” he added, as that gentleman panted up. “I have, as Deerslayer says, no gift. A class of newsboys would embarrass me terribly. I should be afraid to speak lest they should urge me to ‘come off.’”

“I was terribly self-conscious at the beginning.” Never was reproof more tenderly administered; but Pinckney’s face crimsoned. “But there are other worlds than the newsboys. And girls are really harder.”

“You teach them the classics of such teaching, I suppose—to do their duty in that station of life in which a wise Providence placed them,” said John.

“I find that quite hopeless, Mr. Haviland. The best I can hope for is to point out the duties of the stations some grades above. Even then the difficulty is that so many of them feel quite sure they are qualified already.”

“I am afraid they are, as they see it,” said Austin, thinking of Flosheim.

Divining his little hurt, the young lady now let her eyes rest on his a moment. Never was sensitiveness more gently cured. “I should think you could do something.”

Away from the snow’s light, the streets were darker; the throngs on Fourth Avenue impeded con-

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versation; at Twenty-fourth Street they went through to Madison Avenue. John lived just east, on Thirty-fifth Street, and they left him at his door. "I often see him home," the girl laughed. "No, I'll not go in. I know you dine to-night with the Two Hundred——"

"Trying to butt in," said John. "And we can't exchange calls with Rivington Street." Austin went on with her to the corner of Park Avenue, and down one block—then Miss Ravenel stopped, extending her hand:

"Here our ways separate."

"Try and think of something for me to do."

"I will," said the girl simply.

Pinckney looked a moment after her; then, as she crossed the Thirty-fourth Street bridge, he turned resolutely away. He walked rapidly back to Fifth Avenue and on to Central Park. Thence, it being almost time for dinner, he took the elevated railway home.

XXVII

BUT, coming home, he found his wife absent on a theatre and dinner party, leaving a note behind her to that effect.

(Dorothy was one of those who started the fashion of separate engagements. "Why," said she,

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“take every meal with the man you take all your meals with?”—and clever husbands or pretty wives who will accept without their spouses are always in much demand.) So Austin had to dine alone at his club at a season when it was almost disreputable for a man to dine at the club alone. But Mr Miles Breese was also dining there, and, after dinner, he buttonholed our hero. “I want to say a word to you about Allegheny Central. You don’t mind talking here? It saves a trip downtown ” (“and ten dollars,” perhaps one might have read, his thought continued). “Those fellows, they say, have called a special meeting.”

“Tamms? He can’t have got the stock.”

“He hinted to me—that is, my young friend Markoff did—that he had got the proxies. And they only give sixty days’ notice. He asked for mine. Of course I gave it.”

“You gave him your proxy?” Most of Mr Breese’s face could not be redder ; but the color grew more uniform.

“One must stand in with one’s friends, you know, and I don’t deny there was a consideration. I couldn’t excite suspicion,” he added slyly. “But if Markoff is my friend, you are my counsel. One’s lawyer must protect one from one’s friends, eh, eh?” An unctuous smile of anticipated humor invaded his

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round red face as he closed, reminiscently: "Particularly when they are ladies."

"What do you wish me to do, Mr Breese?" said Austin, after an interval of silence.

"We can't tell what they mean to do. If Markoff is telling the truth, they mean to wreck the road."

"Markoff always tells the truth when he can," said Austin.

"Precisely. But we can, perhaps, find out whether his client has secured control. The books are kept in Baltimore. If he has been buying proxies here, he has been buying proxies there."

"Well?" said Austin.

"Well, I thought you might go down there."

"I can't possibly go off to Baltimore. To begin with, it's not a lawyer's business."

"No detective—I mean no agent, a broker, for instance—could go into the railroad office and ask to see the books and things and get any sort of treatment. Whereas a lawyer can frighten them with injunctions and things."

"You can't enjoin a stockholders' meeting. And you don't want to frighten them. They've covered their tracks as it is, if they've been buying proxies only, and the stock book won't show anything."

Miles Breese looked at him, disappointed. He

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wanted to hint at a large fee; but didn't like to. Moreover, he couldn't pay it.

"I am sorry," said he. "It means much to me. And it means more to my poor daughter." Breese waited, and, of course, the other broke the pause.

"Your daughter?"

"Miss Ravenel."

Miss Ravenel! How could she be his daughter!

"It is all she has to live upon, poor girl. But perhaps you do not know her. We have to live very quietly."

"I have met her," Austin said. (*We?* Surely Miss Ravenel had almost given him to understand she lived alone?) "I did not know she was your daughter."

"Ah, I see; of course the name misled you." Breese tapped his chest mysteriously. "Family skeleton, you know. Her mother and I were divorced twenty years ago. My fault—all my fault. For some reason, I never knew why, she resumed, not her maiden name, but her mother's name of Ravenel. We were in Baden-Baden at the time, but she came home to get the divorce. I let her keep our only surviving child," Breese closed pathetically.

Austin evinced no sign of sympathy.

"But my girl remained loyal to me. And now that her mother is dead, I am her only means of

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support." The old gentleman closed, with some majesty, on the *père noble* stop.

"Of course the books are closed," said Austin, after some delay, dismissing Miss Ravenel from the conversation. "We might, I suppose, have some one at the meeting——"

"I wish you would," said the other. "And send somebody whom they can't suspect. And now, have a drink with me?"

"No, thank you," said Austin. "Good night."

He looked at his watch. John's dinner would be over by this time; he might catch him on his way home. And although Thirty-fifth Street was not exactly on the way from Thirty-second Street and Fifth Avenue to Eleventh, Austin was rewarded by finding him in his smoking jacket and—must it be confessed?—carpet slippers. They bore, on a field *gules*, an orange lily, and had been worked for him by a little Jew girl who had been wooed—at the tender age of fourteen—and, at John's suggestion, wed, by a promising young shop boy in his class. They were her bridal present, and John wore them religiously.

"Haviland, is it really true that old Miles Breese is Miss Ravenel's father?"

John puffed away, as if thinking how to express the whole truth compendiously.

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“Under God,” sententiously he answered.

“He has been telling me that he is her only support.”

“Liar!” John puffed away explosively. “The other way about would be nearer the truth. I fancy he gets all her income except, perhaps, what she earns.”

“He boasts that she is loyal to him.”

“That is true enough—she will not cast him off, though her mother did.”

“Doesn’t she live with him?”

“Live with him! Did he say that? The old reprobate. She lives with her grandmother, Mrs Warfield, down in Maryland, in some old country place that is all that they have left. That is, except when she winters in New York—to do good—and to earn, I fear, some money. Live with him! The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children would interfere. Live with him!” John glanced apprehensively at the door; but Grace was making her nightly visit to the five little child’s bedrooms that, Austin knew, were upstairs. “Look here, you may as well know it all. The old reprobate lives with Mrs Beaumont. It would be quite impossible. I’ll tell you what he is in a word. Do you remember Balzac’s novel of ‘La Cousine Bette’?”

Austin nodded his head.

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"And old Hulot, the reprobate, with the lovely wife, who ran after every petticoat, from actresses to grisettes, ruined the family, broke her heart? Well, old Breese is the very New York counterpart of the Paris General Hulot. You might put one for the other. Only his wife, thank goodness, is dead."

"I saw a Mrs Beaumont at Newport, at the Ocean House."

"That's the one. But she does not dare live at the hotel. Thank goodness, his daughter does not know, though he would take the risk of having her visit there."

Suddenly Austin remembered a presence in the park one morning, and something caught his breath.

"The old Major—there is something mighty fine about Tom Brandon—does what he can to keep him straight, and to keep them apart, at some slight risk to his own reputation! He says it's the best thing could be hoped for. She keeps him from others—it might be a pretty typewriter—she has no idea of marrying him, and Brandon says she's not all bad."

"Who is Mrs Beaumont?"

"There are some of us who know. Not Mrs Gower, though. Her name was Flossie Starbuck. Mrs Beaumont's real name is Jennie Starbuck."

"Is?"

"Is. Some say she's Flossie's cousin. Any-

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how, she had a brother. She began as a dressmaker's apprentice at Rose Marie's upon Sixth Avenue. He was a socialist, anarchist, had been a railway laborer and risen to be clerk. Did you ever hear of Lionel Derwent? "

"I have," said Austin with a pang.

"He told me that Rose Marie—as she then called herself—had been led astray, as Jim believed, by Flossie's brother Si. However that may be, Derwent met him shortly after addressing a mob just before the Pennsylvania riots of 1878. And soon after the Starbuck Oil Works burned up in a famous fire. You've heard of Starbuck Oil? "

"It belongs to the Allegheny Central," said Austin.

"Precisely. And Mrs Gower still holds her stock. Well, one Charlie Townley was really Jennie Starbuck's protector at that time; but he was a close friend of Si's, and the brother may have seen them together. Anyhow, he was suspected of having fired the works in revenge—there is no doubt the fire was incendiary. The East River ran with burning oil when the tanks exploded. But the only man on the premises was the watchman, and he was found blind drunk and nearly frozen."

"Didn't they pursue Starbuck? "

"Except that Derwent had seen him fire an oil

well in Pennsylvania, there was nothing to point to him. And Derwent, with that curious Oriental loyalty to his friends, even if they were pirates or murderers, that characterized the man, never told this to the authorities. The only kind of criminal that the author of 'Piccadilly' couldn't tolerate was the seducer or the swindler."

"Who are received in our most exclusive society?"

"A month ago you would have said our best. Your moral tone is improving, young man. Well, the watchman would only say, upon examination and cross-examination, or on that night to the police, that he was blind drunk; that he had been blind drunk all night; and that, please God, he hoped to get again blind drunk in the morning."

"He must have had a good lawyer," laughed Austin.

"There speaks your truer self. Well, Jim Starbuck sank to be a common thing; he was convicted of robbing a man in the street with a slung shot, *obligato*; sentenced for ten years; and at Clinton is said to have boasted of the Starbuck fire. And Jennie—when Townley failed, she went to some Jim Fisk sort of a type, and after he died, old Breese became her easy prey."

"Great heavens," said Austin; "he must be over seventy."

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“Sixty, sixty, young fellow; look at Mary Ravenel.”

“But at his age——”

“There are two vices will never leave a man—the passion for drink and a taste for women—especially when he has them together.”

“But how can Miss Ravenel——”

“That is the mystery. Of course she is positively color blind to all in the world that is not good——”

“Not quite,” said Austin. “She is no fool.”

“She is no fool. Neither was Galahad or Parsifal——”

“‘Durch Mitleid wissend, der reine Narr,’”

hummed Austin.

“Some mistaken sense of filial duty, perhaps. Or, perhaps, she brooded in the old Ravenel tower and idealized him. Of course, when she came to New York, she knew nothing about him. She had never seen him, I know. Perhaps he wrote to her—probably asking for money—I give it up; certainly her mother had had to leave him, and would not even keep his name. Grace,” he asked, as his wife, after a preliminary knock, came into the room, “why did Mary Ravenel take up her father?”

Grace Haviland at five and thirty was a lovely

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woman; Lucie Gower had told his wife that she was the greatest lady in New York, a speech at which Flossie was generous enough as well as intelligent enough not to demur, though the Havilands had never accepted her dinner invitations. At forty, New England women often look their best; matronhood becomes them. But it was not her beauty that Austin noticed in the searching glance she turned upon him. She seemed to read him through and through; and then she spoke, as if now reassured. "Had not her mother cast him off?" John interrupted.

"I think her mother had cast him off. For nigh to twenty years she never spoke of him. To-day old Mrs Warfield will not hear his name. But before she died—I do not know that it is our business except to explain Mary's actions, and I'm sure they never need it—her mother, Mrs Breese, Mrs Warfield's daughter, made her some confidence——"

"Mrs Warfield." The name recurring again, Austin Pinckney tried to think in what connection he remembered it.

"Mrs Warfield was born a Ravenel, of South Carolina, and her daughter, Mary Warfield, she married to Miles Breese, then the richest young man in Baltimore. Why, upon the divorce, she took her mother's name and not her own, I cannot tell. But

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before she died she told Mary—our Mary—all about it. I have sometimes fancied she had some remorse, or at least repentance or regret.”

“That cannot be,” said Haviland. “The scandal is historic. He left her, openly, at Baden-Baden, with their young daughter, and moved into Mrs Reichmann-Wyse’s house without leaving the place. The mother, being a South Carolinian, where no divorce is allowed, hated to ask for it; but her very self-respect demanded it, to say nothing of the legal right to Mary.”

Gracie opened her eyes mistily. “I do not know—I do not try to know. There may be other than patent infidelities—perhaps she had not tried to make the best of him. I only know that Mary was half ordered, half entreated, by her dying mother, to seek him out and reclaim him if she could.”

They were silent. “What a flower to grow on such a stem,” said Austin, at the last, when he saw that no one else would say anything. “But, Haviland, I came in on a matter of business.”

“Oh,” said John, lighting his pipe; “what is it?”

“With your bank’s connections in Baltimore, and quietly, do you think you could find out for me the present ownership of Allegheny Central stock?”

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Haviland reflected. "It's chiefly dealt in in New York, though they transfer in Baltimore. Mrs Gower has some—by Jove, and so has Mary Ravenel. I might find out, in my banks, how much is pledged." Now, John Haviland was a director in half the banks and trust companies in New York.

"That's exactly what I should like. I can find the owners of record, but not the persons by whom it's pledged."

The next day Austin went into Mr Gresham's office and asked him what to do about his talk with Breese.

"Did he tell you he had given proxies on his daughter's stock?"

"No."

"I wonder whether he has. The poor girl has only a few hundred shares—but three or four hundred dollars would tempt Miles Breese. We can easily find out—it stands in our joint names as trustees, under order of court; it was her mother's alimony. We'll give another proxy, in my name, to some discreet person, and have him attend the meeting and take notes."

"It mustn't be any man in our firm," said Austin.

"No, nor any New Yorker known as such. It would excite notice, particularly if there's a contest

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over the proxy. I have it." And Gresham took a proxy slip, and wrote on it, "Magdalen Aylwin of Hadley, Mass." "Will she do?"

Austin reflected whether he ought to tell his chief that he had seen her at the Ocean House at Newport. "I would trust her anywhere," was what he finally said.

"Any extra man at a stockholders' meeting always excites suspicion," said the astute lawyer. "We hold all our meetings with our clerk and the local attorney. But there is often a woman or two. They usually hold five shares—and they *always* kick," he added.

"Mr Gresham, you were Mrs Breese's lawyer at the time of the divorce. Why did she not resume her maiden name?"

"You must ask Messrs Calvert & Calvert, of Baltimore—they were her local attorneys and *they* may know—perhaps she did not wish her known name to get in the papers. I was told the Maryland statute allowed it. I never ask my client's motives, unless I ought to know."

And for a second time in one week our eminent young advocate felt himself gently set down.

And going to his own desk, he scribbled "Mary Ravenel, Mary Ravenel"—then "Mary Warfield"—on a sheet of legal cap. And beautiful Miss Ayl-

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win, coming in with a sheaf of typewriting, must have seen it; for Austin then carefully tore the sheet in fragments and threw them in his wastebasket.

XXVIII

JOHAN HAVILAND reported that there were at least one hundred thousand shares of Allegheny Central stock in New York pledged in the loans of Mr Phineas Tamms or in the straw names believed to represent him. His own particular bank had none of them, being of opinion that you never make money in dealings with a rascal; other banks were not so timorous, or so scrupulous; but of them Haviland could hardly ask to see the actual share certificates Tamms had pledged; and short of this there was no way to determine who would have the right to vote on them at the coming special meeting. It was of course possible, too, that the original owners—the owners “of record”—had given him proxies. That he had been buying proxies they already knew.

On this state of facts, the three partners principally concerned got together one day in consultation. At the repeated requests of Mr Miles Breese for an interview, they had also caused a note to be

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dispatched to that gentleman stating that Mr Gresham would give him a consultation that day between twelve and a quarter past. It was now nearing the earlier limit.

“If he owns or controls one hundred thousand shares, so large a compact block always attracts floating shares; and usually, in the absence of organized opposition, it will control the election,” Mr Gresham was saying of Haviland’s report. “There are four hundred and seventeen thousand six hundred shares.”

“The books were closed so suddenly that it looks as if he had got the balance of the half in proxies,” said Radnor.

“There is a statute in New York making the buying of proxies a misdemeanor and the proxies void,” contributed Austin.

Mr Gresham’s eye glittered, but only for a moment. “I am afraid the validity of Tamms’s proxies will be determined by Maryland law. And what is a fine of a thousand dollars to Tamms? What we want is to block his game or to send him to the State prison.” Austin looked up; it was unusual for Gresham to show such feeling. Just then Miss Aylwin came in with a paper, and said that Mr Breese was in the outer office. “Tell James to show him in.”

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“Good morning, Gresham—good morning, Radnor—hello, Austin,” said that gentleman airily; and while Pinckney was wondering what intimacy of theirs had justified him in using his familiar name, he observed that he was endeavoring to give to the meeting the tone of the Piccadilly Club, where he was somewhat of a magnate, and which Gresham rarely entered. “Mighty pretty young lady that clerk of yours, Gresham. Where have I seen her before?”

“Mr Breese, in the fifty years that you have been an ornament to society”—Mr Gresham spoke icily, with a slight stress upon the numeral—“you must have seen all the pretty women in New York several times. May I ask you kindly to forget that you have seen Miss Aylwin at all?” A sort of explosive puff came from the Celtic Radnor; and Mr Breese flushed red. But, after all, the clay of which he had been moulded had been gentle clay, and he did not answer as Austin had feared.

“You are right, Mr Gresham,” he said with some dignity. “It was none of my business. I have come about Allegheny Central. There is no doubt that people in Baltimore and Philadelphia have sold a great deal of stock. And they did it because Tamms frightened them into it. And Tamms has got it.”

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“That squares with what I hear from Philadelphia,” said Radnor, who had recovered himself. “The old women clucked that the fox was in the poultry yard. The Pennsylvania Society for Granting Annuities to the Wives of Deceased Soldiers of the Wars of the Revolution and 1812 and Others tumbled over itself in its hurry to sell out.”

“And the strange part of it is,” Breese went on, “that he circulated the rumors himself. I don’t know about Philadelphia, but in Baltimore Tamms appeared openly, and shortly after sent items to the newspapers to the general effect that one Phineas Tamms, of New York, was in danger of securing the property, and that Tamms was a damned rascal and would wreck the road.”

“He spoke the exact truth,” said Mr Gresham. “At such times he is exceptionally dangerous.”

“And the effect of his honest advice, of course, was to make the lambs cut the price of their own wool as they handed it to him,” said Radnor. “I said before, we must organize. We must have a stockholders’ committee of protection.”

“That is easy,” said Gresham thoughtfully. “But it must cost him something to carry it. He started buying the stock at 120, and these tactics have got it down to 85. Where does he get the extra margin?” For answer Austin handed him

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Haviland's letter. Gresham took it up and read a sentence Austin had just underscored: "'Of late he has been putting up as additional collateral large quantities of Bellefontaine Pacific bonds and Allegheny Pacific new stock and withdrawing the Allegheny Central.' Can he be already selling, now the books are closed?"

"Bellefontaine Pacifics are bad paper," vouchsafed Mr Radnor alliteratively.

"The bonds sell about par," said Mr Breese anxiously.

"Are quoted. He owns 'em all."

"There is also a good deal of—what's this? Allegheny Central preferred stock."

"*Receipts* for preferred stock," corrected Austin. "'Issued by Tamms's Brooklyn Trust Company for and against four per cent preferred stock of the railroad when issued.' That is what he means to do at the meeting."

"Obviously," said Mr Gresham. "And lease the Allegheny Pacific and guarantee its bonds."

"Faith, he's very kind in telling the widows and orphans to sell out, and damned good advice it is entirely," said Radnor.

"Most of the widows and orphans that have been doing this last selling have an office on Wall Street," said Mr Gresham. "And in my opinion

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it's not far from the office of Phineas W. Tamms."

"And the others had better sell too? Remember, my daughter's stock."

"We'll see—we'll see. We'll let you know in time. To-day it would be hard to sell it at all, if Wall Street has had time to read that circular." Mr Gresham pointed to the notice of the stockholders' meeting, and Austin took it up and read it.

"'Allegheny Central Company. For the purpose of enabling the company to make desirable Western connections, and to enable the directors to acquire by purchase, lease, or consolidation such property, rights of way, companies, or franchises as may in their judgment be necessary, and to provide the ways and means for the same.' There is a breadth of style about that I rather admire."

"Wall Street, though not sedulously addicted to literary pursuits, is a fine judge of style," said Radnor.

"Markoff took English One at Harvard," said Austin.

Gresham rang the bell. "No, I want Miss Aylwin," he said to the man. Mr Breese looked out of the window. "Miss Aylwin, will you be good enough to telephone Haviland & Co. and ask the present price of Allegheny Central? Don't let the office

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overhear you. Auerbach & Markoff are quite capable of paying a salary to one of my office boys," he explained, while they waited. "And I can trust Miss Aylwin."

Mr Breese looked as if he were making a mental note of it. In a minute she came back with a slip:

"Opened at 84, sold to 71; now 71½; no support; selling by DeWitt, Duval & Holyoke, believed to represent insiders."

"My God," said Breese devoutly. Mr Gresham looked at him, as he tore up the slip.

"Mr Breese, when you gave Mr Markoff a proxy on your own shares, did you sign one also for the stock we hold as trustees for your daughter?"

"Yes," stammered the old man. "I—I thought you would have no objection."

"Not the least in the world," Mr Gresham went on. "And for the same consideration, I presume?" He paused until he elicited a reply.

"Two dollars a share; it was as much as a dividend."

"Of course, of course. You will see that the amount is placed to the credit of the trust. And now, Mr Breese, I think we can do nothing more for you to-day." And that gentleman took his leave with the air of one who has left his tooth behind at

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his dentist's and the place still aching. Mr Radnor betook himself to his private office, whence were heard certain cachinnations indicating that he was not wholly abandoned to the practice of his profession. Austin went into the library and became absorbed in the examination of a complete set of the Maryland legislative acts, secured by him recently at some expense and rather to the surprise of the outer office. Whatever he was searching for—possibly the charter of the Allegheny Central—he was rewarded by coming upon an act “dissolving the marriage previously existing between Miles Breese and Mary Ravenel Warfield and authorizing the latter to assume the name of Mary Warfield Ravenel.” Curious, thought Austin. He was aware that Delaware had been in the habit of granting special acts of divorce, but had no idea the Maryland Legislature had ever done so.

There are but few ways of getting uptown in New York, and there were still fewer at the time of which we are writing. Among them that of Centre Street and Lexington Avenue is perhaps quietest, if not the pleasantest. You escape the crowds of Broadway, the noise of Fourth Avenue; and, of course, the lower Bowery is impossible for a woman. The surface cars are objectionable and the Elevated

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overcrowded. Austin, having hired for his wife the brougham, liked to save on carriages for himself; moreover, he preferred the air and exercise of the four-mile walk.

The crowds in our great city's thoroughfares vary curiously, to the sympathetic observer. To begin with, at seven in the morning, there is the east and west crowd, through Twenty-third, Fourteenth, Thirty-fourth streets—mainly young women, the breadwinners. Many a New York lady has never seen these; and would be amazed, also, if she saw the crowded foredecks of the ferryboats that feed them—young women, many of them mere girls, bright faced for the most part, thank Heaven, and looking healthy—the corresponding crowd at sunset looks rather jaded and is not so definite; it disseminates itself, perhaps, among the shops; moreover, the hour of closing is not so uniform as that of the morning whistle. Then there is the morning Elevated crowd—at seven, mechanics; at eight, clerks; not so many women among the mechanics, the men only, it would seem, “having the price” of the daily fares. Then there is the nine o'clock crowd, also recruited largely from the ferries—fathers of families in the Jerseys and Long Island, “commuters,” largely upper clerks, salaried men, or partners in small firms, also (it would seem) on their own account doing an express

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business; then a little later the Elevated “swells,” the real (as they believe) New Yorkers—they who sleep in the city. While in the afternoon are the crowds of shopping women (hardly breadwinners these); still later, the young women from the matinéés, not breadwinners at all. Of some such things may Austin have been thinking when, as he turned through Astor Place into Fourth Avenue, just ahead of him, he recognized Miss Ravenel.

XXIX

AUSTIN did not wish to appear to be following her; yet he could not walk on without overtaking her. For a minute he feared it might annoy her to have him speak to her at all. He finally left their side of the wide street and crossed over, walking more rapidly. Then he crossed back and met her, face to face. The frankness of her greeting dispersed his hesitation and they walked on together.

“You are from Rivington Street, I suppose?” (It was a Friday.) “A better place than Wall Street.”

“I am not so sure,” smiled Miss Ravenel. “Mr Haviland says that Wall Street is the only part of the United States where a man’s word is as good as his bond.”

“That is because a spoken promise is simple and can’t be evaded. The moment a lawyer is hired to express it in a bond, another lawyer is hired to discover loopholes in it.”

“I have heard that a lawyer was the keeper of his client’s conscience,” laughed Miss Ravenel.

“All the same, one sometimes wants a higher job.”

“Do you know, I’ve been thinking about our talk the other day”—it was really some weeks since, but Austin’s face colored with pleasure—“and I have an idea of something—not perhaps higher—but of something else that you might do, I believe, very well; if you can’t teach newsboys. And I do not think it ever has been done.”

They were coming to the corner of Fourteenth Street, and, as the crowd of carriages delayed their crossing, Austin stole a look at her. She was speaking almost eagerly, her fair face, on which every eddy of thought had its quick expression, aglow with enthusiasm. “I am sure that you could do it.” And again—oh, blind, blind!—might any passer-by have noted his answering flush.

“It is to have a class, many classes, and not of boys but of men; and teach them something not merely of the law that environs them, but of the right that is in the law. The workingmen, the

trades unions, I mean; I know they are so often wrong; but I know that there is right, too, on their side. And I know that there is right in the law that seems so cruel to them. They have never been told so—they do not understand it. They have no one to guide them—politicians are their only counsel, walking delegates their advisers—no one serves them single-heartedly, no one talks to them that they can trust.”

Austin reflected a minute. “The difficulty, of course, is to win their trust.”

“Yes, at first. But why should not a man give his leisure to it? Or even—I am sure it would be worth his best work—some of his working days?”

“I do not know much about the law of labor disputes——”

“Nor do I. But—I suppose I ought not to say it to a leading advocate,” she continued with a laugh. “Yet I feel sure the trouble has been that they have not looked at the law as embodying the right, but only as a thing contrived against them and for the means of escaping it. Take the boycott, for instance—the sympathetic strike.”

“They taught me in Cambridge that every boycott was an unlawful conspiracy,” said Austin.

“I suppose you know,” the girl answered dubiously. “It would be, if the motive were to hurt an-

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other. But suppose the object is only to properly benefit themselves—to do together what they might do separately, in order to gain some wholly reasonable end? ”

Austin looked at her curiously. Her thought betrayed a wonderful maturity of mind; for he did know enough of the law of the subject to know that this was deep reasoning; and yet, like a woman, it was intuition that led her so promptly to the heart of the difficulty.

“Of course one can study the subject—beyond that I should hardly know how to begin.”

“Why not join some labor union yourself? ”

It gave the man a novel pleasure to be directed by her, but—oh, blind again!—he did not stop to question it.

“Could I? I don’t know a trade. I once did a little bookbinding.”

“You might start as an apprentice!”

“Oh, there are unions everywhere! The very fishermen on the Massachusetts coast have formed one, and, I believe, their employers a trust. The oyster trade is now directed from Chicago.”

“Coming from Boston, you might begin with codfish! Or perhaps you own a salmon river? The fishermen in the Restigouche need protection, I am sure!”

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The girl laughed happily; at least her life had left no trace of pedantry. And she saw things clearly, did this Una, with her man's intellect and her woman's heart. And how beautiful she was! No one else seemed to have noted that; Pinckney hugged the discovery to himself. He had not known that there were such young girls in the world. Then he managed to turn the conversation to her own affairs; she talked with infinite comprehension, infinite pity, of the life of working women in New York; then they had a word or two of fun on "society" matters. Alas, in a moment, as it seemed, they were at Thirty-fifth Street—John Haviland's corner. She slackened her pace as if expecting him to stop.

"I am not going there to-day," he said, as he looked at her. Her eyes, which had been fixed directly upon her interlocutor and had been clear as sapphires, took, on his look, their other shade of misty blue—indescribable in words—it was as if two curtains of azure mist unrolled between their thought and his. She was again a young girl, following alone some delicate instinct.

"Oh, I supposed you were—then our ways divide here."

Not for worlds would Austin have dared question the fiat.

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“May I see you and report progress?” he queried humbly.

“I have to go home in a few days—to my grandmother in Maryland.” And again the warning came, and to his sinking heart the noise of the avenue was as the bubbling ocean in his ears. He raised his hat; for one brief second he watched her walk away, then, that he might not seem to note her path, he turned and rapidly walked on, until he found himself in Harlem.

“Love comes unseen; we only see it go.” Any man or maid of Mrs Gower’s light world would have seen it and taken it lightly enough. Perhaps it was the not taking it lightly that made him blind. He thought, no more than she, of any bond between them. He did not think of himself at all; it was only that his heart, which had been heavy, was now very light. He was thinking only of the work that lay before him to do. As for Miss Ravenel, there was no need to think of her: she *was*.

When the man did come to self-consciousness, it was with a pang. Something suddenly put Mamie Rastacq in his mind, and the shudder of his degradation. Nothing yet was in his heart that his being wed to Dorothy made wrong; but who was he that he should seek a young girl’s friendship? Bitterly he remembered a Spanish proverb, that a kiss, once

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given, is never past. Yet, like a ready balm, there came, too, some new comfort. For his heart told him that he should never be again the man he was that night in Lenox. He had saved his soul alive.

XXX

MENTION has been made of a small New Hampshire city, Nauchester by name, whither the business of a certain mill had taken Austin on the previous summer. This mill, at West Nauchester, made dress goods—prints and gingham—although the business of the neighboring city was the manufacture of shoes. And it happened, that spring, that the entire working population of this city went on strike. Now with this their law firm would have had nothing to do, but that the women and boys (there were no men except an engineer or two) employed in the print mills struck also; and these were still in the hands of a receiver, and the receiver was a client of theirs. Moreover, they were about effecting a successful reorganization—may one explain, for the contingency of a lady reader possibly in such things ignorant, that “reorganization” is the term applied to the process by which the old debts of a corporation are got rid of

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and new debts contracted, usually by the simple device of pretending that the old corporation has died and creating a new one, greatly to the satisfaction of everyone except the creditors? But the borrowing of the new capital this time depended upon the mill's being "a going concern." No one would lend new capital while the strike lasted and the mill was idle; so the receiver, their client, was in despair.

The mill agent had informed him that the print works strike was a "sympathetic" one; that is to say (although there appeared to be no particular connection between the two industries unless they thought the heathen or the negroes, having no shoes, might as well go unclothed entirely), the girls in West Nauchester stopped making printed cottons because the women of Nauchester stopped making shoes and brogans. And it seemed difficult to discover what the true cause of the Nauchester strike was. The newspapers had spoken at first of its origin as being among the lasters, who objected to the use of certain new machinery; then there had been talk of a printed contract being required of those who returned to work; evidently, at least, it was no question of wages or hours. But the prosperity of that portion of the little State was seriously affected; and its governor and the mayor of Nauchester, with a self-appointed committee of phi-

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lanthropists coming from Boston, were reported to be about to have an interview with the strikers *en masse*, to see what might be done. And their client, the receiver, not wholly satisfied with the foreman temporarily in charge of his mill, who had himself come recently from Nauchester, was anxious that some one should go on to represent him before the strike committee. And Austin had offered himself for the mission.

He had been to the Havilands' on the Saturday following his walk to Harlem, as chronicled in the last chapter; but now he went again. He had been reading up, not only the law, but the literature of the subject—Wright, the Webbs, Powderly's massive magazine of misinformation, besides the usual Government publications—and he was already aware that (at that period) it had been found impracticable to organize women into unions, and also that among them a sympathetic strike almost never occurs. Woman is a born individualist; her mind is essentially practical, and her motives begin at home. And Austin felt that a conference with Miss Ravenel would be invaluable to him; her imagination might furnish him with the clew he desired, and, for that reason, he was desirous of seeing her. Except by accident (he reflected) he never met her but at the Havilands'. She was going South now in a few

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days. But she had never asked him to call (how could she? Miss Just Out, with her own front door and the protection of maid and butler, may ask a man to call; the Nauchester mill girl may entertain her "gentleman friends" though she share her one room with another girl—not so a poor young lady living in a Lexington Avenue apartment house), and Austin did not know her address. He found himself quite incapable of asking John or Gracie for it. So, instead, he called there every day and regaled them both with the fullest explication of the details and difficulties of the Nauchester labor troubles, stating with some particularity that he was leaving New York on the next Friday, the Eastern committees having selected Sunday as the most convenient day for their efforts at peacemaking, and that he thought the whole affair one of peculiar interest to anyone concerned with the industrial condition of young women. But all this ingenuity bore no fruit.

So it happened that Austin left the city with a heavy heart. And also (he supposed it was only) because he had a painful scene with Dorothy on the morning of his departure—if scene it may be called where the dramatics are all on one side. His had hardly been a speaking part—his words, in fact, were limited to the simplest statement (in answer to the first question with which, in her bed, she greeted

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him) that they were not going to Newport that year. His dislike of the place was intolerable (he had, of course, to put it on that ground, not on one which implied a doubt of her—indeed, he felt none, in the vulgar sense, it was only the general deterioration of their life there; and to express anxiety for the state of Dorothy's soul would have sounded, in his Southern ears, presumptuous if not ludicrous), especially in a boarding house; a "cottage" was, of course, beyond their means. "Mr Markoff has taken one" (he often, now, had to hear the taunt of Markoff's greater success); "perhaps if you cultivated him more he might help you."

Now, Dorothy (and the reader knows why) had never yet herself been willing to invite Markoff to their house in New York; for she still could feel, with that animal purity, that shrinking from the physical contact that had never deserted her, the horror of the touch of Markoff's warm, moist palm upon her dainty arm. Austin looked at her, but kept silent; he felt that he could not have been counsel to such as Tamms. If that were the way to riches, they must remain poor. Then she threw a letter at him, across the coverlet.

Austin was in his overcoat and gloves, hat in hand, already on his way downtown; he had only come in to greet his wife, as she liked best, after he

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had had his breakfast and she had taken her coffee and had got a dressing wrapper over her nightdress. But now he put his hat and gloves aside and sat down to read her letter, which was from Mrs Somers, and imparted the news, half terrified, half triumphantly, that Daisy was determined on marrying an Italian prince. "Of course he has no money," she lamented, "but that is not the worst. His life has been *most* scandalous" (the underlining was her own), "but to poor Daisy the *title* is everything, though he is only the fourth son of a younger brother of the real Prince dei Puzzi, and the title is Parmesan. Prince Giovanni simply *lives* at Monte Carlo, and if his life is more moral than it was, it is only on account of his health, or because he can't *afford* to keep mistresses, and the married women won't have him. You must let her come to you, at Newport; I am sure that's the only place will cure her."

Austin had been somewhat amazed at the evident frankness with which mother and daughter had treated the other questions; but at this last suggestion he raised his eyebrows.

"Distract her, mother means," said Dorothy. And to his suggestion of a quieter place—Dublin, for instance, or even the Beverly shore—it appeared that indeed Newport alone could offer superior charms to life in Parma with a titled husband at

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Monte Carlo. And then Austin's talent at cross-examination at last elicited a mention of Van Kull. The Machiavellian subtlety of this imagination had at first given him pause; then he grew indignant. But to his suggestion that Dorothy was exposing her sister to the risk of having her heart broken, or even worse, Dorothy had shrugged her shoulders—Van Kull was not “a marrying man,” she hinted—and seemed to think either accident better than marriage with “a rotten dago”—a speech which even the sanction of slang did not make pleasant on her lips. Moreover, she appeared to think that desperate diseases required desperate remedies; and finally hinted, with a plainness of speech of which our Southerner was still incapable, that Van Kull might go to the extreme of flirtation with a young girl and yet be careful of her reputation—“a girl in his own class, I mean.” And Dorothy ran over a Leporello's list of young ladies' names and pointed out that nothing had ever been “really known.”

Thus it happened that Austin was not in the best of minds, when he took the Boston train, for considering the more real evils of the Nauchester mill girls. He only felt like cursing the stupidity of the founders—Alexander Hamilton and Ben Franklin, both judges of female character too—for abrogating titles in America. Here the bait of a Parma

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marquisate—even shared by a dozen others, the very title outweighed all else. It would have been so easy to sprinkle around empty titles—for it is not the political reality our young women seem to care for, not the English peerage; the mere honorific to the name is all they want—and thus have gratified the social cravings of our proudest heiress and kept the old man's honest dollars at home. And this without infringing the prerogatives of a political democracy, which is all we have left or (say the demarchs) hardly that. A duke of Virginia or a marquis of German-town might not always be attainable; but surely an earldom of Brandywine—or even to be Viscountess Bunker or plain Lady Schoharie—would now have jingled as pleasantly in Daisy's ears as Marchesa (Giovanni) Puzzi. And then the order of the Cincinnati should be hereditary chevaliers, thus making all their honest women Ladies. Possibly not many of this historic American nobility would now be found at Newport; and this also would make no harm. For, as to Newport, Austin had been firm; no more of it. In return, he had volunteered the suggestion of a house on the Beverly shore; and that would cost much more money than Cléry's cottages. Well, it is the first duty of the American husband to provide the money; the last duty required of him is to be with his wife where she spends it. Beverly was far-

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ther off than Newport; but he might, probably, be at Pride's Crossing (he had written to Mrs Shirley about a house there) every Sunday. And at Beverly, Austin thought, he would feel safe. Exotics like Killian Van Kull could not breathe in that rarified Puritan atmosphere, or the ragweed impart its influenza.

As Austin got farther from home, his spirits rose. The tidy New England fields, foaming with houstonia—pity the brave little flower, so lavish of itself in our bleak spring winds, has not got a better name, for they are more like dancing nymphs than “Quaker ladies,” and “bluets” is affected. And the comfortable gray rocks heartened him; the frosty vigor of the air. Anyhow, he was a different being than he had been last fall. Not only his own work, but his still larger impersonal interest in these great human questions, industrial, social, vital—now gave him interest in life. Sympathy with other lives can fill one's own. He felt, too, that he came to this present contest, to the Nauchester operatives, no longer empty-handed, no, nor empty-hearted. All lay in that. His heart was in his work.

So he sat, with the governor and the mayor and a lady or two, through all the pompous platitudes of the Boston philanthropists, on the platform of the crowded hall next day; hardly hearing them, indeed,

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as he looked down at the packed audience, silent, respectful, willing to meet them, even to be lectured by them, more tolerant of their interference, he felt, than he would have been had their cases been reversed. He would now have felt himself in a false position had he not, privately, spent the previous day in interviewing many of those he now saw sitting in the hall. Nine-tenths of the audience (audience was the word, they listened so patiently) were women; the few men were Poles, Armenians, Russian Jews (the employers, of course, all Yankees, sat with them on the platform). It was said they had all been out of employment eleven weeks, and that there was already much distress among them; there was no evidence of this as Austin looked around the room. Nearly every woman had a sealskin coat (imitation, he supposed) and many of them diamonds. Their chairman was giving them a carefully prepared historical account of the vicissitudes attending the introduction of machinery in industrial handicrafts; at times he lost his place and fumbled with his eye-glasses—he was reading from manuscript—at such times their attention wandered and they looked as if they had heard it all before.

After this public function was over, they went into a smaller room with the leaders of the strike; and here they got one step nearer the real issue that

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divided them. The Lasters' Union, it appeared, had long since given up the fight on the new machinery; but all hands objected to returning under a printed contract to be signed by each individual. It was general, not personal, obligation they would promise. Here the governor of the State launched into an eloquent exposition of the sanctity of contract, only stopping just short of expounding the Dartmouth College case, a matter they would hardly have understood; while he did learnedly explain the doctrine of implied contract, and how, by accepting employment at all, they subjected themselves to the reasonable conditions of the proposed written contract; the only new thing being that they were not again to strike without two weeks' notice and the service of a writing, stating the reasons for the strike and signed by the officers of the unions affected or by the leaders of the strikers if individuals, upon a permanent arbitration committee. But most of the men, it seemed, did nevertheless consider the signing their names to any document a serious step; while many of the women looked as if they were not always prepared to give their reasons in black and white. And then a clever Irishman stood up and proposed, as a reasonable counter provision, that the manufacturers should also sign the contract and agree to an additional clause that in future no em-

ployee should be discharged without a corresponding two weeks' notice, or, if for cause, immediately, but in such case handing the employee a letter stating such cause, which should then be reviewable by the same arbitration committee.

At this, one of the shoe manufacturers, a down-Easter named Slick, who had himself risen from a bench in what was now his own factory (Austin afterwards told Miss Ravenel that the "soulless corporations" he found much more broad-minded and considerate of the rights of labor than the self-made mechanic who had become an employer), lost his temper completely and wanted to know what they wanted anyhow. "Parcel of loafers, d—n em!"

"Remember," said their courtly chairman, "there are ladies present." Mr Slick snorted.

"I know what they can do, and what they can't do. I've been on a bench myself——"

"And been the meanest pacemaker of the lot," interpolated the clever Irishman.

"The whole question comes down to this: Are they to run my business, or am I? That's what I want to know," said Slick.

In the wrangle that ensued Austin took no part. He knew very well that both sides had substantially made up their minds to the terms, save for one matter that had not been approached as yet—could not

be, perhaps, in that mixed conclave. One of the girl leaders—that is, an unmarried, handsome woman of twenty-five, native of New Hampshire, a high-school graduate—encouraged by the others, yet after far more hesitation, Austin had thought, than Daisy or her Newport friends would have shown, had boldly spoken out to him, the evening before, in the favorite ice-cream saloon, about the real trouble; she was here now, but she would not dare, he knew, bring such a subject to the fine ears of the Boston ladies that formed a part of the committee.

His attention wandered to the walls of the room they were in. It was evidently the assembly hall of the local union. No pictures were on the walls; but there was a printed copy of the union's by-laws, some framed Federation of Labor notices, and a "Catalogue of the Library of Lasters' and Binders' Unions Nos. — and —" in handwriting. Evidently, for library purposes, the men and women had combined; for the binders were all women. Austin took his notebook and furtively jotted down the list; for these, presumably, were the forty best books of which we have heard so much. The list differed materially from Sir John Lubbock's. Some were mere hysterical appeals to class hatred: "Esau, the Banker's Victim"; "Bondholders and Breadwinners"; "Speaking of Ellen." And most of these, Austin

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found when he and John came to read them, contained lurid portraits of a corrupt American aristocracy: "Pray You, Sir, Whose Daughter"; "Is this Your Son, my Lord?" "A Pure-Souled Liar." These books themselves were more corrupt in imagination than the realities they tried to portray, and Austin wondered, as he came upon another title, "A Scene of Sin," why it was that human nature should find more interest there than in those of virtue. These were subterranean literature indeed. Yet many of them were published by the News Companies, though, as he afterwards found, hardly any are to be found in the public libraries. Then there was a somewhat better class, of curious and not uninteresting stories of Bohemian life; stories of young women art students, of their successful resistance to city temptations; then there was, of course, the usual classic story of high life written mainly for domestic servants, "From Seamstress to Duchess," and the like. A few were what the authors would doubtless have entitled "scathing arraignments of American political conditions," likening the state of the American republic to that of Russia, or of France before the Revolution, and written, probably, by recent Slavonic immigrants. The titles of these told the story: "The American Peasant"; "The American Siberia"; "The Coming Slavery." In this class,

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too, one might put those written against religion: "Kept in a Convent," "Address to the Clergy." But the largest class of all were mere tracts about socialism, in the guise of a story: "The Way Out," "The Strike of Sex," "The Coming Climax," "Why do Men Starve?" and Altgeld's classic "Crimes against Criminals." The politics of a democracy were satirized in "The Member of the Third House," "A Spoil of Office" and "Horace Greeley—Farmer, Editor, and Socialist." In the whole forty there were not more than six or eight recognized works, to be found in any library—and those were by Tolstoi, Henry George, Hamlin Garland and Robert G. Ingersoll, with "Merrie England," "Looking Backward," Gronlund's "Cooperative Commonwealth," and a translation of Bebel's unspeakable *magnum opus* on "Woman."

And this was the reading upon which the coming proletariat (they loved, he found, in these books, to use that word) was being formed. He was even, considering their titles, surprised at the wheat to be found with such chaff. But then there was only one kind of wheat. This literature, which alone had the ear of the people, contained, besides socialistic propaganda, only two things: scorn of religion, class hatred. As literature it was dull, dull even when indecent—yet how compete with it? But, withal,

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though dealing with sin for the morbid pleasure of it, there is no touch of levity; the lofty ethical purpose runs through every page like the muted violins of a melodrama; they remain solemn as judges and condemn the frivolous with as little sense of humor as a sensational minister pointing a moral tale.

So Austin mused, and awoke to find that an agreement had at last been arrived at, much facilitated by Mr Slick's angry departure from the room; and that night, through all the country, would flash the news that the great Nauchester strike had ended. The chairman buttoned up his fur-lined overcoat; the governor began to frame his announcement, in a sedulous first person singular, to the Associated Press; the male shoe workers were fling out, when, at the last moment, a girl said something about the troubles in West Nauchester. They could not, she argued, desert their friends, especially, she added significantly, since one of the wrongs that had caused their own strike had now become theirs. A committee of conference was appointed, and Austin moved for one on behalf of the employers. He was appointed chairman, with power to name two others. He selected the village doctor and the Roman Catholic priest, and he had already telegraphed their client, the receiver, for permission to do what they ultimately resolved upon.

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For he had not been idle, the day before; the work had all been done and the matter settled, Austin knew, before their chairman had begun his speech. Guided by the hints of his friend in the ice-cream saloon, he had visited West Nauchester. And, considering their reading matter, the conditions they had asked for were passing strange. The mill had recently constructed a row of model boarding houses for the unmarried girls; the plumbing was perfect, the rents fair, and there was an elaborate code of social rules to which the occupants were expected to conform; devised by the wife of the last treasurer, who was a Boston millionaire, it was humbly imitative of the code of conduct and social manners that might be expected of a well-bred young lady on the Back Bay. Now these rules, they had insisted, should be abolished; they desired complete liberty of action and no police inspection. But the other demand was of a different nature; it was, that the present superintendent, as he did not come up to their moral standard, should be discharged. This, as Austin reflected, was nothing less than a boycott, a criminal conspiracy to the injury of the individual. Nevertheless, he had acceded; only he wondered whether many metropolitan ladies, on or off the stage, would have been so fastidious. According to both the major and Mamie Rastacq, women liked a sultan.

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But perhaps, in our new democracy, both Mamie and Tom Brandon might be wrong.

He had recently begun to think it possible.

XXXI

THE little West Nauchester mills opened on the Monday morning in charge of a new superintendent, temporarily loaned them by one of the big Nauchester concerns for their help in bringing to an end the strike; and Austin drove out there early and had the satisfaction of seeing the wheels revolving and some hundreds of happy-faced young women at work once more. It was a bright April morning; the sunlight came through a hundred open windows with the sweet spring air, though on the Pack Monadnock the snow still lay; and Austin felt the mill was not so bad a place after all. The evening before, after the settlement, he had seen again the leaders; they were still puzzled, but now met him quite frankly, without suspicion of his motives; although the men would hardly believe that he was a lawyer, of which profession they took a cynical view. Some suspected him to be the walking delegate of the rival labor federation. But Austin assured them that he was not even a member of a union; whereupon they

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invited him to join one; and he profited by their good will to obtain a letter of introduction to their central organization in Boston.

So, this work done, he returned by the afternoon train to New York, to find Dorothy already gone to bed, it being still Lent. Through the door, she begged him not to disturb her; she had come home tired from a dinner. He was tired, too, and he turned away, almost relieved. There had been growing up by tacit consent a habit of evading occasions demanding intimacy between them; the perfunctory kiss, given downstairs, before the maid, he could perform; more than this they avoided. And in the morning he had his breakfast alone, and went down town without disturbing her.

At the office he found his work cut out. Markoff, in his absence, had not been idle. It had been definitely announced that Phineas Tamms, now only president of the half-completed Allegheny Pacific, would be elected president of the Allegheny Central at the annual meeting, and that meantime, at the special meeting, things would go his way. In high finance, a hand is rarely played out; when one side insists, the cards are shown, or, perhaps, the mere ability to draw them, and the game is ended. Meantime, the Central stock was very low, but what did Tamms care for that? All the value which he had squeezed

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out of it he had simply to pour over into his Allegheny Pacific stocks and bonds, and of these he owned the printing press. All this was pretty gloomy; Gresham was depressed; Austin's success at Nauchester seemed to be already forgotten; Breese had been badgering them with letters, and even Levison Gower was anxious. The cheaper Wall Street publications were already terming Tamms the Napoleon of Finance, and predicting his control of all the railroads in the country; while Augustus Markoff was "the great corporation attorney." Austin went to John Haviland; but that gentleman could give him little help. He could only keep him posted on Markoff's loans; meantime, Mr Breese was reported to have failed to protect his margin at the Old Dutch bank he dealt with. Yes, he supposed his daughter had gone home to her grandmother.

"Then we can do nothing?" said old Mr Gresham, on his return. Austin said nothing, but began delving in the old laws of Maryland.

"The Miners' Bank have got involved with him to the extent of a million or more—they have finally put the loan in our hands to collect. But Tamms puts us off with promises."

"The security is ample at present prices," said Austin now. "I suppose you'd hardly force him to make an assignment."

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“Assign? If I could break him forever, drive him from the Street—but nothing short of State prison would keep him away. Look here, Pinckney ” (for the young man had again looked up, surprised at his elder’s manner), “once before this Tamms was allowed his way in Wall Street, and as a result my oldest friend, my first client, a generous, noble gentleman, lies in a dishonored grave. You may have heard that this man was once a partner of Charles Townley. His wife died with him, and soon after Peter Livingston, Townley’s oldest friend, whose trust his firm betrayed, died, too.”

“Mrs Rastacq’s father?” said Austin.

“Yes—then the poor girl married for money. I was present that day at the Columbian Club when Livingston, who was the oldest member, drew the ink across his old friend’s name on the list. I never shall forget it, and just then dear old Townley himself came in, and he had lost his mind. He took me for his dead son.” The telephone rang, and Austin went to it.

“It is Mr Breese,” he said. “He wants to see me ‘at once’ at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.”

“You had better go,” said Mr Gresham. “He may know something.”

It was the beginning of a long spring storm, and Austin walked up under gloomy skies. He always

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walked up now, and this time he took Centre Street and Tompkins Square—a “bare ruined choir where late the sweet birds sang” to him, but not so commonly esteemed, and to-day, it must be admitted, naked and uninviting. At home, where he called, the skies were no cheerier. Dorothy had arranged the tea, but there was no caller. “Do you see what the papers say of Markoff now?” It was the *Evening Glare* she pointed to, a journal not highly considered. And then it appeared that she had sent one of her cards to Markoff for that afternoon, and that he had not come. Austin said something to her about the Beverly house, but she showed no interest; she was convinced “Pride’s” would be “poky.” Then there was a ring at the door bell, and she started up. “Oh, go to your club,” said she, as Austin bent down to kiss her.

“I’m not going to the club, I’m going to the Fifth Avenue Hotel”—an unlikely statement, it sounded.

“I’m sure I don’t care where you are going,” said she, refusing her lips, so that his mustache just brushed her cheek as Mamie Rastacq entered the room close on the maid’s announcement.

Austin started back; he had not seen her since that night at Lenox.

“Oh, I am so glad I interrupted,” said the lady;

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unabashed. "Petrus Gansevoort says you don't live together any more. Now I shall be able to contradict it." And she extended her hand to Austin with the frankest good-fellowship, and looked merrily into Austin's eyes. Perhaps there was a gleam of malice in them; at all events he (we do not pose him as a blameless hero—he was just a man) was angry enough to answer to the effect that she—any woman, his gentler self corrected—must know that a kiss did not always entail such consequences.

"And whose fault is it?" the lovely lady asked, with gaze engagingly direct; then she turned laughingly to Dorothy. It must be admitted, Mamie was a good fellow. But Austin got himself out of the house, half relieved, half angry, that their first meeting had passed off so easily. She evidently felt no abasement; she preened her plumage as gayly again as any song bird after a shower; it was he who suffered. Yet—though Austin would have perjured himself to the contrary before any tribunal except his own soul—it was she who had held up her lips. But what had she meant by speaking so of Petrus Gansevoort? Their past relations, Gansevoort's and theirs, were well known, and no one had ever before dared mention them to him. Well, that was part of the price he had to pay. So he broke his word to Dorothy and went to the club. He could not bear

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Mr Breese at present. He must see some men—men of Mamie Rastacq's world. He had made himself fit for none other. And this desire was gratified; for the first person he saw lounging at an avenue window was Petrus Gansevoort himself. Naturally, they cut one another. Austin went to another window where he sarcastically set himself to reading an indecent French periodical. Fortunately, in a minute, Major Brandon came in. He also was in his most cynical of moods. Austin tried to tell him something about Nauchester, the life at the mills there, the social condition of the mill girls; he asked him what he thought could be done.

"Don't know," broke in the Major roughly. "Great mistake, to trouble about young women's souls."

Austin was silent. He had tried it once. Was the Major thinking of that?

"The good ones do a d—d sight more harm than the bad ones," the Major said next.

Austin was, for a moment, startled. Yes, he had taken cure of her soul, and had failed, and it did seem the Major was thinking of that, for he went on further.

"Hear you're not going to Newport this summer. Good thing, too. At last, you remember—'tis the ring finger holds the curb."

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"I don't like the place for my wife's sister," said Austin.

"Oh, rot your deceased wife's sister—the English know a thing or two—keep your wife alive. Good story, that." He pointed to a picture in the comic paper; it was of a dinner party; a man was sitting opposite a lady whose dress was slipping from her shoulders and staring at her with all his eyes; the legend had him asked why he stared so at his wife, and the answer was that he never saw her much at home.

"Dirt," said Austin. The Major shrugged his shoulders.

"Dirt's all very well in its place," said he. Just then, an amazing thing happened. Petrus Gansevoort calmly walked in to their window and took the chair on the other side of the Major, first spreading his chest in the window, with a deliberate stare at Austin. He was a heavy, stupid man, already veined in the face and with pendulous jowls. Then he sat down.

"Major," said he, "what do you do when a pretty woman tells you she no longer lives with her husband?"

Mr Gansevoort had not been able to maintain his gaze on Mr Pinckney. Had he done so, it is possible there would have been a scandal in the club. But if

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the Major felt any alarm, his face did not manifest it.

“Well, in my own experience,” he answered drolly, “I have always begun about then to study the rôle of Joseph.” Then he shouted, without apparent connection, “Brazen it out, Peter! brazen it out!” His louder tones attracted the attention of others in the room; Gansevoort colored and, somewhat clumsily, got himself away. “Those gray eyes of his looked the size of saucers,” Brandon said afterwards to some friends in the room. They had not, of course, heard Gansevoort’s speech; and Gansevoort’s eyes were small and brown with pinkish lids. It was evident that the Major did not refer to Gansevoort.

But Austin cared not a straw for Gansevoort; moreover, he knew that he was lying, in what he had said to Mrs Rastacq, that is; here, his statement, fortunately for him, had been general. For Dorothy had never spoken to Gansevoort since their marriage. Austin’s mind was already upon other things. He was sick of this place, too. Moreover, it was more than time to go to the Fifth Avenue Hotel. He waited until Gansevoort left the room, to make sure that he had nothing further to say; then followed, a few seconds after, and saw that gentleman’s coat-tails disappearing in a toilet

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room. Austin then walked out, into Twenty-first Street.

“Dirt, it all is,” he was thinking. “Dirt and money. Money and dirt.” The words rang into a refrain like the bells of St. Helen’s. Breese with his Mrs Beaumont, Gansevoort with his *coryphées*, Van Kull with his *demivierges*. Yes, and frank, perverse Mamie with Mrs Gower, high priestess, and her postulants at Flosheim; and then Tamms, and her husband’s millions; now, old Breese with his little pittance—and something here gave a grip to his heart.

Breese was not only in, but anxiously waiting at the vestibule. “I want you to meet a very particular friend of mine—’pon honor, there’s good reason for it—she’s largely interested in Allegheny Central securities—Mrs Snyder, of Pittsburg. I have ventured to say that we would call upon her. She is stopping here.”

Somewhat puzzled, though the mystery of their appointment was at least explained, Pinckney suffered himself to be led to the elevator and thence to a pretentious parlor on the third floor. There he met a stout lady, in a most splendid afternoon gown, but faintly, perhaps, indicating a widow’s weeds by its alternate display (the arms were large enough to

THE COLUMBIAN CLUB



“‘Brazen it out, Peter! Brazen it out!’”

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repeat it several times) of black satin and pink flesh seen through lace. At her ears she wore single pearls the size of cherries, the weight of which had pulled the lobes into longitudinal creases. On her mountainous bosom she wore a large porcelain miniature of a man with a black mustache.

"My friend Mr Austin Pinckney—Mr Charles Austin Pinckney," said Mr Breese, pompously accentuating the surname, "who was so anxious to meet you."

"Delighted, I am sure," the lady simpered.

"His wife, you know—you saw her picture at the ball last night in the *Crier*." Mr. Breese looked at Austin appealingly.

"She is very tired to-day," said our hero, at a venture. Mr Breese beamed approval. Austin was more puzzled than ever. Throughout the interview he could not make out whether Breese was showing him off to Mrs Snyder or showing Mrs Snyder off to him.

"I think you know Mrs Arthur Shirley," prompted Breese, to Mrs Snyder.

"I met her on the committee of the Centennial Exhibition; I represented Pittsburg. That was when Mr Snyder was alive. Pittsburg is a bigger place now." And the widow, who had contracted her chest in a sigh so that her husband's miniature

had quite disappeared, at the last words expanded it with a full breath of relief, causing his black mustache to appear again between the billows.

“She is his aunt.”

Austin had been forced to bite his lip at the mention of greater Pittsburg; and now he really felt that he must say something about business. But Mr Breese demurred to mention of business before a lady, and she asked if they would not like a glass of champagne. Even Mr Breese did not dare meet Austin’s eye on this, and they took their leave. Then, with a humorous contraction of an eyelid normally dropped by gout, he explained in the hall, “Mrs Snyder thinks she is seeing New York society.”

But Austin, who had little sense of humor that day, impatiently asked about business.

“She *has* got some stock. I met her at my broker’s. And now I want you to go down to Baltimore and fight that meeting. You’ll have to be there some days before, and lay your wires secretly. And my daughter is down there with her grandmother, and I want to write to her that you are coming. Miss Ravenel, I mean; you understand, I am not on good terms with the grandmother—the mother-in-law relation is really an impossible one—but my little girl, I am happy to say, has been true

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to me.” Mr Breese spoke with some pathos. “And her welfare also is involved in this.”

(John Haviland, when this part of the interview was related to him, said that the damned old reprobate—for John would swear at times—took it all, all the income, that is.)

“Mrs Warfield’s pension dies with her—you knew she was an admiral’s daughter? They are very proud of the name Ravenel—he went off in a torpedo boat, I mean a gunboat, at Algiers, and never came back—1815 or thereabout—that’s why they stick to it so. The old place is valueless, and, I suppose, Warfield saw it mortgaged all right—no slaves now, you know. I’ll write to Mary that you’re coming.”

“No, no, don’t do that,” cried Austin. “I’ve already told Gresham I’d go down. But really I prefer being at a hotel—or the clubs.”

“Well,” said Breese, “I know a club can make a man more comfortable than two women. But you must run out and see the old place—it’s rum—Ravenel, I mean.”

Austin said he would, and got away. The rain had increased and the streets turned to mud. “Gold and dirt—earth and gold.” What else was to be in his life? He got home; Mrs Rastacq had gone, anyhow; his wife was upstairs. On the hall salver he

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saw a note addressed to him. Why did his heart give a great leap? He had never seen the handwriting before.

The note paper bore the Havilands' familiar address, but it ran :

"MY DEAR MR PINCKNEY :

"Grace, who has a bad hand, has asked me to write you—she hopes you will come to lunch here Sunday. We want to hear about the Nauchester people.

"Yours sincerely,

"MARY RAVENEL."

XXXII

IT rained furiously for two days, though it is possible Austin did not notice the fact particularly before the Sunday afternoon. He was at the office before nine on the next day; at eleven, rang his bell and asked if Mr Gresham had arrived, and, if so, would he come into his (Pinckney's) room a moment?

"I think I have got it, sir," he said simply; and he pointed to one of several open volumes on his desk. Now, it should be explained that in Maryland, as in most States, the Legislature, for the convenience of the multitude and the confusion of the lawyer, en-

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acts, every twenty years or so, a general "revision," containing all the laws supposed to be then in force; and the careless lawyer is apt to presume that it does so. But besides this there is the usual annual volume of laws, now numbering a hundred or so, and amounting to several hundred statutes a year to each volume; and these statutes, ten thousand or more, from early colony times to now, remain in force unless *expressly* repealed by the last "code." And for the greater convenience of the lazy practitioner these laws are still further divided into "public" and "private"—an admirable distinction if the digester distinctly distinguishes! The law to which Austin pointed was in the part of the musty volume denoted "private" and was the charter of a certain Accomac & Pocantico Railroad Company granted in the year 1838. Pinckney had underlined part of the section relating to stockholders' meetings which, after saying they should have one vote for each share, added the proviso that "only the true owners of any stock should vote thereon, and if shares should be transferred in mortgage or pledge the pledgee should not be deemed the true owner for purposes of this section."

"Does it mean, not even if the certificate is transferred and the stock put in his name?"

"That's what it says."

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Gresham smiled. "A wise and excellent provision, but I don't see where the Allegheny Central comes in."

Austin pointed to another volume, that for 1868; it was the act for the consolidation of the Allegheny Central with the Accomac & Pocantico Railroad Company, and covered several pages. Toward the end of one of the middle sections was a clause to the effect that the new consolidated company should be vested with "all the franchises, exemptions, rights, powers, duties, or privileges of either constituent company," and its members, officers, and stockholders be subject to corresponding rules. For a moment the old gentleman's eyes had glistened; then he put down the book.

"This will never have escaped Markoff."

"I think it will," said Austin. "These are old Private Acts. The charter of the big railroad, given in 1849, is in the Public Acts. It is also a canal company; and the revision of 1878 only incorporates the general railroad act of 1852 which only applied to railroads 'hereafter incorporated,' and the reviser of 1878 sapiently left these two words out."

"All charters were made subject to amendment or alteration at the pleasure of the Legislature."

"Not in 1828," said Austin. "The Dartmouth

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College case was decided in 1819, but the Maryland Legislature didn't discover it and enact the usual safeguard until 1832."

"This Accomac charter is therefore perpetual?"

"I don't see why not," said Austin. "My only doubt was whether a stockholders' vote was an 'exemption, right, power, duty, or privilege' of the corporation. The only thing they were after was the exemption from taxes it contained."

"Young man, you will be a good lawyer, better than I ever was, but I can help you now." Austin blushed like a boy. "As a practical question Markoff will never be able to rest on this stockholders' meeting if he votes the pledged shares. No banker will take his new securities. We ourselves would never certify his precious preferred stock to be legal. A cloud on the title is all we want. What I fear is, first, there won't be any pledged shares voted—for that you must go to Baltimore to find out; second, that Markoff will be onto it, particularly if we protest the right to vote on the shares, or some of his local attorneys will, if he is not."

"We won't protest the votes; we'll protest the vote," said Austin.

Gresham looked at him admiringly.

"I'll declare the whole vote illegal, and he won't know why. And he won't have any local attorney.

His game is too sharp to trust a confederate, and his brain too brilliant to divvy on its inventions." Austin laughed with pleasure.

"You mean, he'll hog it all?" When Mr Gresham stooped to slang, he was in his most confidential humor.

"I was at the Law School with him."

"Pinckney, you need no help from me. The meeting is on Monday. Better go down to-night and work around Saturday in Baltimore."

"I think, sir," stammered Austin, "Sunday night will do. I am in correspondence with the bank there; but one such vote is as good as a hundred—after the meeting has adjourned. Tamms is certain to vote the stock pledged to his firm. He had it all put in his own name before he borrowed on it at the Miners' Bank. And the meeting is not till two."

"So that Markoff can run down on the morning train. Miss Aylwin can go down by the same—or stay, is he sharp eyed?"

"Where a pretty woman is concerned," laughed Austin.

"A Jew never hesitates between a pretty woman and a dollar, though. Read your 'Nibelungen'—remember Alberich's oath."

Austin knew his senior to be a man of culture,

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but was surprised at the range of it. “‘Only he the hoard attaineth who the chain of love forswears,’” he hummed.

“Precisely. He’ll think she’s a country-woman—that she got on in New Jersey—looking after her stocks. Miss Aylwin!” He rang the bell and that young woman entered, looking very pretty, mature, and dignified in her simple black dress. “Miss Aylwin, I want you to go to Baltimore, on the early Monday morning train, to the meeting of the Allegheny Central at the Eutaw House. Take shorthand notes of everything that is said. Mr Pinckney will have arrived there before you and will leave with the clerk a note for you giving his telephone number. And kindly consider yourself under his orders.—Have you got the proxy?”

Austin drew from his pocket a proxy slip; it was for 200 shares in the name of “Miles Breese and James G. Gresham, trustees for Mary Ravenel,” and signed by Gresham only. He handed it over to Miss Aylwin.

“Am I to vote it, sir?” She spoke to Pinckney for the first time.

“Only if there is no opposition. If the proxy is objected to, desist at once, but make protest in such a way that it can be proved you were prevented. Notice particularly the number of shares announced

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by the clerk as present. If you have any doubt what to do, telephone me."

"Austin," said Mr Gresham as he went out, "Miss Aylwin must not be the only person in the hall besides Markoff and the clerk."

"I've seen to that, sir," laughed the pleased junior. "It is to be the greatest meeting Allegheny Central ever saw. There'll be a good lively opposition, if only to disarm suspicion." Mr Gresham again started to go; then he put his head in again.

"Austin, if Tamms votes those proxies, couldn't we make it a fraud, a criminal offense?"

"I'm afraid not, sir. He does everything under the advice of Markoff."

"Who will, I suppose, advise him how to avoid going to jail but not how to avoid going to hell. Well, well—do what you can."

Austin laughed light-heartedly as he closed his desk. He walked uptown, humming the "Rheingold" melody, in the rain. What did the storm matter? Dorothy, he found, was gone to Tuxedo for the week-end; she had recently made him become a member of that institution, which had special apartments for absentee wives, besides "kennels" in case of children. She had not even left a note asking him to follow. That did not matter, either, he thought for a moment sadly. But he could not be

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sad long. He dined early, at an Italian restaurant, with some labor men—trades-union leaders—whose acquaintance he had made by means of his Boston letter. Then, when they left for their country trains, he went to the Metropolitan. The opera was the “Rheingold!”

XXXIII

THE great storm continued all the night, Sunday morning relaxing a little, as if to let people go to church. Shortly after noon the down-pour became so violent that even Austin noticed it. In the morning he had walked to Claremont Hill and back, amid the budding May; after one (he did not wish to be too early) he rang at the Havilands', and was ushered into the narrow New York library, doubly dark on that dismal day. Gracie Haviland was sitting on a long ottoman, and beside it, as he shook her hand, he was conscious of another presence. He did not dare look often at Miss Ravenel even in the dim room; her cordial greeting he drank in, then turned to Grace. But at the table, she was opposite; it was natural to look at her, as they broke bread together; how beautiful she was! He hoped that no one else might see it. She looked more like a young girl to-day; he wondered how old she was

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—twenty-two? twenty-four? They wanted to hear about the Nauchester strike; as well as he could, Austin told them. Again he was struck with her strange maturity of views; it was the perfect purity, the grace, of her own spirit, that gave her prescient mind so large a view. And Austin thought of that saying of the Evangelist about the Virgin—“Jesus went down into Nazareth, but she stayed at home, *knowing these things.*”

He told them of the mill girls, their essential right-heartedness with all their boldness and *abandon*, their surface vulgarity; of their dislike of all dictation as to how they should lead their lives, even of the salutary rules and regulations devised for them by well-meaning ladies.

“They have their own latchkey,” said John. “With the latchkey goes everything. The bicycle was significant, but the latchkey is the symbol of complete freedom. It is ridiculous to withhold the ballot when you concede the latchkey.”

“John,” said Grace, in a tone of voice. Mrs Haviland was a leader of the anti-woman-suffragists; and thereupon John told Austin as much.

“How distressing,” laughed Miss Ravenel, “that in these days so many virtuous causes should have to be indicated by negatives!”

“The woman operatives do not want the suf-

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frage,” said Austin. “They are thinking of other things.”

“The ballot might occupy their minds instead of flirtations,” John urged.

“They are not thinking of flirtations,” said Austin sternly. “They are leading their own lives.” He could not bear to have such subjects treated flipantly in the presence of Miss Ravenel. “If they have not the sentiment, they have the sense.”

“It is the ‘Society’ women, the ‘club women’ of small towns, the women whose husbands spend their evenings at the lodge, mostly, that want the suffrage,” contributed John, who saw that Austin wanted to treat the subject seriously.

“‘Dowered with the sway of life or death
They cry for coarser tools,’ ”

said our Carolinian.

“I am sure that we see and know better without having the vote,” said Miss Ravenel. “But if women are to be as men—knowing good and evil—is it not right that they should have their liberty of action? When you take free will away from a fair deed, you have taken all its virtue. Perhaps the mill girls are right in demanding a larger life, certainly one not monastic. The great pity is that so

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few can hope for a woman's natural right, the right of her heart to love and be loved."

Austin looked at her, during this speech, as he might have looked at Thekla in the arena, which was, perhaps, what suggested John's next remark; it was, "What else did he see in New Hampshire?"

"Well," said Austin, "for one thing, I discovered American literature; I learned what the people are reading." And he took out the book list he had copied and passed it round the table.

"How many of these books do you suppose are to be found in the Astor library—in any library?" said John, much interested.

"I don't know—very few, I should fancy. Tolstoi and George and Bellamy and Victor Hugo—Garland, of course, and Altgeld, in some—I tried myself to find Bebel, at the Mercantile, and couldn't."

"Ingersoll, I suppose."

"In every village library. He advertised himself widely to the lower middle classes by insulting the Deity—the thought was not original."

"I knew you were a churchman, but I did not know you were an aristocrat," laughed the older man.

"I am not. I mean the lower classes intellectually. Some of that lower class are millionaires—

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the class, when piously inclined, that go to Mrs Eddy but do not read St. John."

"Will you give me the list?" said Miss Ravenel. "I should like to see how many of my girls have read these books. I know something of Helen Gardner," she added as Austin put the paper in her hand hesitatingly. "After all," she merrily ended, "they have not risen to Ella Wheeler Wilcox!"

"Or any poetry," said Austin.

"I fear it is too little in their lives. Do you know, I have a mind to make a serious study of this literature?"

"Let us divide it," said Austin hastily.

"By all means—a reading committee," said John, seeing Pinckney's drift. "You and I will take all the plums—Grace can do the heavy atheistic, Miss Ravenel the social and economic."

"Oh," said Miss Ravenel as the party rose, "I *must* read 'From Seamstress to Duchess.' I should just love to be a duchess, to meet duchesses!" She said the word with the prettiest little *moue*, as of one who enjoys a luscious morsel.

"Then you must stay in New York, or go on the stage," said Haviland. "When do you leave, by the way?"

"To-morrow. I am going down to Baltimore to-morrow—and out to Ravenel."

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"I am going down to-night," said Austin frankly.

"Shall you be there long? You must come out and see us."

"Several days. I am going down about the Allegheny Central fight."

"Allegheny Central—why, that's all my vast fortune! Mr Pinckney, you are my attorney! Of *course*, you must come out and see us."

"Well," said John, "if you won't smoke, Austin, I must leave you two to discuss your law business. Gracie has to take the carriage for an hour, but she'll be back before tea—and, Miss Ravenel, you must let us send you down—it's storming frightfully."

(Her attorney! Her knight-errant had been better, but the possessive was everything. Austin stood like one who sees the trees walking. He saw Miss Ravenel walk toward the fire. She sat down. Was her gesture one of dismissal, or did she indicate a seat to him?)

"You must take the train for Frederick," she was saying, "or you might even ride."

They were sitting in the dark room; against the street windows the storm was beating; but the fire was between them, and through the open window behind him came the fragrance of a bough of blossoming

lilac. But still, he talked of their one subject in common—labor questions, the human life that ebbed and flowed around them. Possibly their talk became more earnest as the twilight deepened; certainly, he did not laugh any more. What he said came from his truest belief—no half-believed-in thing, no thought of pose, still less of any jesting humor, seemed worth while. As it grew still darker, Miss Ravenel seemed to grow more thoughtful—her unfathomable clear eyes were fixed upon the embers. He permitted his own eyes, now, to rest upon her face. It seemed that his talk must have come to an end.

“I must go,” said the girl, suddenly jumping up. “I had no idea it was so late.” The clock was striking five.

“But you must wait for Mrs Haviland.”

“I really cannot. I have something I must do at home.”

“You cannot walk in this rain.”

“Oh, yes.”

It was now pouring a very deluge.

“You must not,” said Austin firmly. “If you won’t wait for John—I must have a carriage myself—I’ll get one.” They were in the hall, the girl putting on her light waterproof; Austin did not stop to help her, but, umbrellaless, ran to the corner of Mad-

ison Avenue, where he was fortunate enough to find a carriage, and came quickly back in it.

“I beg you go home in this.”

“But I shall be taking your carriage.”

“It is not my carriage; I found it on the corner. Good-by.” And Austin held out his hand, with, I suppose, something of a dog’s expression in his eyes.

“You are all wet. If it’s my carriage, I can’t let you walk in the rain,” said Miss Ravenel impulsively. “Get in!”

Get in. When good Master Beckmesser bids Walther Stortzing sing of spring—the song he learned from Walther von der Vogelweide—he says, “Begin.” And Walther opens his song with the word, and the spring begins. Her two words fell like some such melody upon his heart. Only that Walther was conscious of his song, and Austin, still, was as innocent of any conscious love as was the girl herself. He did not recognize it: he had never been in love before. He was six years older, but it was possible the girl would recognize it first.

Austin closed the door. He had had to ask her address. The cabman turned around to Park Avenue. It was the shortest way.

He never could remember what was said upon this drive. Later, when he knew, he would try to remember, when these (ah, how pitiably few!) rare

moments with her he would count over to himself, in the coming lean years when he would have bartered seven years of his own life for as many hours of hers. He remembered that he looked at her, and it was Thirty-fourth Street; she was saying something to him and her gentle eyes looked straight before her, eyes so gentle that they were redeemed from softness only by the brave straight brow that made a shade above. Now they were at Lexington Avenue. All was over, they were there.

He helped her out; he held the umbrella over her. She insisted on paying for the carriage—a half dollar. Austin put it in his pocket (the cabby got a bill instead) and was about to ring the bell. “No, no; you see I too have a latchkey,” the girl laughed. Austin looked at the stained-glass door, the indescribably squalid entrance to a New York “flat,” and his heart sank, but not for that alone.

“Good-by,” said Miss Ravenel, putting out her head.

“Good-by,” said Austin. There was a pause.

“And don’t forget to come to Ravenel,” she added simply. The door closed as Austin bounded down the steps—no more carriage for him. On second thoughts, he entered it, and bade the coachman drive to Central Park. (She must believe he went home in it.) At the park (the carriage had been a

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memory of her, and the world smelled of the dust of roses) he dismissed the cabman, stupefied (he haunted, for weeks after, the corner of Thirty-fifth Street and Madison Avenue), and walked; the storm was breaking at last, in the Easter Sunday sunset; the birds sang softly; the earth lay under a Good Friday spell. There is no maid in "Parsifal," though, only Kundry.

He could bear no man's presence; he got some food at the Claremont, then he walked way back to Eleventh Street and entered the empty house. He called no one, but packed his things himself. If the thought crossed his mind of waiting for the morning train, it was rejected. He did not want to see her again, not yet.

The river was full of lights, but after a few miles, the night was quiet and mild. There was an "observation" car, which he found he had to himself. The night was so mild that he even sat out on the rear loggia (why not call it a loggia?) to smoke; he loved to hear (as he could, when the train was still) the spring noises, the tree toads, the piping of the frogs in the marshes, the things that are in Schubert's C major symphony; still smoking, the gray dawn found him, reaching its long pallor down the dim still water of the Susquehanna; over there lay the Laurel Ridge; somewhere there, she had

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said, was Ravenel; in the Baltimore cavern station, the puzzled porter, but proud, took his tip and deposited his open bag at the hotel; after a bath and coffee he was on South Street; there he worked with vigor through the morning; at two he was in a telephone booth at the hotel; in half an hour a message came from Miss Aylwin.

“I think they have counted all the votes. They at first refused but then accepted mine. The business is begun. I think Mr Markoff recognized me.” Austin dropped the receiver and hurried to the Eutaw Hotel, where, showing his proxy, he demanded admittance to the hall.

“The question is on the guaranty of the Allegheny Pacific bonds and the issue of the Allegheny Central preferred stock as read,” Tamms was saying. He was standing up before a little table on which stood a pitcher of ice water. Markoff was beside him; a row of reporters were scribbling before a lower table in front. Behind him was the figure-head president. “The lease has already been voted. The guaranty on the bonds and this new stock make the consideration for the lease. Have all voted who wish to vote? The meeting is now adjourned.”

Austin stood up. “Before the meeting adjourns I wish to give notice to its chairman that we shall contest the vote, both upon the lease and the guar-

anty, and upon the new stock, and the validity of the meeting itself," he said very distinctly.

Tamms sat suddenly down and his face turned white beneath its freckles and its wiry red beard. The reporters began to scribble furiously. Markoff looked down at Pinckney who remained standing, Miss Aylwin's minutes in his hand. Markoff's glance traveled from him to her.

"On what ground, Mr Pinckney?" Tamms could see the reporters dash at the name.

"On the ground that the guaranty and lease are a fraud upon the stockholders, the proxies for this meeting unlawfully secured, and the stock illegally voted."

"On what ground, may I ask? And whom do you represent?"

"I represent Messrs Gresham, Radnor & Auerbach of New York; and they represent the Miners' Bank of New York, the Philadelphia Society for Granting Annuities to Survivors of the War of 1812, the South Bank and the Calvert Trust Company of Baltimore, and thirty-seven private stockholders, according to a list I have here—all whose stock has been voted by you as representing pledgees, not real owners as the law of Maryland requires."

"The law of Maryland? Here, Mr Pinckney, is the code," smiled Markoff.

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“I refer to the law of the Allegheny Central Railroad & Canal Company, its own charter as shown in the consolidation act with the Accomac & Pocatonic Railroad, special laws of Maryland, Private Acts of 1838.”

For the first time, Pinckney could see Markoff blanch—blanch as he had seen the Yale team whiten when, in Cambridge, he had played guard and on the second down they failed to hold.

A reporter spoke up deferentially. “May I trouble you for that reference, Mr Pinckney?”

Markoff turned and had a whispered colloquy with Tamms. That gentleman seemed to breathe again. His color came back, and he began rolling up little paper pellets and throwing them around the table.

“I move the meeting adjourn—for one week,” said Markoff.

XXXIV

THIS, which should, in any biography of Charles Austin Pinckney, be the longest chapter in the book, always seemed the briefest day of his own memories, and will doubtless (when Pinckney’s biography appears, as now that he is Secretary of the Interior seems likely) by his biographer be

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omitted entirely. For what biographer even knows the real life of the man he is writing about? Except as in the case of some men, usually poets or libertines, who have consciously revealed themselves. These we know a good deal about, from Dante, Heine, de Musset, to Casanova, Cellini, de Retz; as in Rousseau or (we may even suspect) St. Augustine. What did ladylike Mrs Oliphant know of the real Browning? Egregious Lockhart of the real Scott? Even Madame Hanska of the real Balzac? Balzac was talking to Madame Hanska, as we say, "through his hat," as a Frenchman always does when he writes to a woman.

But we, who are writers of fiction and not of biography, know the truth. We must stick to fact. It is, or should be, our business to portray our heroes and heroines as they really are—even to dwell upon those omitted chapters which were the evening and the morning of the life we study. Yet even master Thackeray and master (for he wrote the truth in his fiction) Balzac leave much—Balzac not quite so much—for the reader's imagination to supply. They tell you, *he loved her, she did not love him*, almost with the simplicity of Heine's formula:

"Sie war liebenswürdig und er liebte sie,
Er war nicht liebenswürdig und sie liebte ihn
nicht—"

but they do not tell you what she said to make him love her, what he said to make her love him not. Thackeray's intellect probably recoiled from recording Amelia's love talk, but he does not even tell us what Becky Sharp *said*. He tells us she was very clever—he does not give us auricular demonstration of the fact. Shakespeare goes something farther with Mercutio; but then Shakespeare was (as the Gospel Society man said of St. Paul) “our best contributor.” It is true, as the Catholics told the Paulicians, St. Paul says a good many things that ain't so—as two hundred thousand Albigenses doubtless, while they burned alive, realized. Balzac, too, really gives us something of the conversation and *moeurs* of his great ladies, his clever rascals, his women of the town. Madame Marneffe opens her lips to us as well as her dainty throat; the contemporary American novelist tells you of his heroine's ebon tresses, her violet eyes, her shell-like ears, her pouting lips, but lets it go at that. The lips pout in silence, the brilliant brain we accept as a working hypothesis.

I dare say, the other things would bore the reader. Richardson surely wearied us of his Clarissa, his Grandison; and for us moderns his chaste correspondent must be abridged, the Lovelace expurgated. I dare say this chapter will weary the reader—if I dare go on! And what will he think of

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my poor hero when we are through with it? Wisely his biography, waiting for the Carnegie libraries of the land, will have no use for it—for this chapter of his life.

“My grandmamma, my grandmamma,
She had a leathern Bible,
And there she enters all our dates—
The day we're born, the day we die, the day we
had the measles.
She never entered on its page
The day my heart was broken.”

O cousin Amalie, cousin Amalie, was Heine thinking alone of you when he wrote these lines? I wonder. He had, we know, a pretty young wife, a nice little girl, cuddible, like a kitten, pretty as our Dorothy and without her social ambition, content to be at home and make love to him. Clever Madame Joubert (*la Mouche*, he called her), who lighted the last turns of Heine's path through life, thinks (a little jealous, perhaps?) that she does so rather too much. Was Dante thinking always of Mrs Portinari—when he wrote his Provençal love song, for instance?

But they, Charles Pinckney and Mary Ravenel, talked of Dante to-day; it must come in this chapter, and here we are, still shivering on the brink of it.

Austin went straight from that railroad meeting to a stable where he picked out a saddle horse; then,

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stopping only to put on his riding things and send a telegram, he was off and riding through the park by three of the spring afternoon.

Fourteen miles, the map told him, lay between there and Ravenel, which lay in the first rising foothills of the Laurel Mountains. They were quickly covered; and at five Austin found himself entering, between two great posts of shattered masonry, an old, old avenue, stretching straight away between two rows on either side of forest trees. The trees were grand, but so old that they were dying; the avenue unkept; the heaps of last year's leaves still lay in the beechen hollows, the drift of magnolia petals, crimson and white, lay on the new grass. Tulip poplars, magnolia grandiflora, alternated with great sycamores and walnut; soon, by their side came down a brawling "run," tumbled freshly into Maryland from Pennsylvania hills. Something reminded our hero "as he rode" of the little stream that redeemed Mrs Arthur Shirley's vulgar lawn and then made one quick scamper for the sea. Now, round hills were rising on each side, brushing the blue with a wash of tender green; on the left he could see rows of empty whitewashed cabins; the stream to the right ran under two dismantled old stone mills; a cow or two grazed in what had been a deer park; gardens appeared, marvelous in their box and yew,

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the beds neglected, rising in a terrace to a wall garden backed upon the stone wall of a huge barn, such as hitherto he had seen only in Gloucestershire, in England, and upon a long retaining wall, mellow of brown stone and green moss, bulging irregularly here and there where not supported by its huge stone buttresses. Then the avenue plunged through a dark archway, cut in the tall box trees, whose warm, old-time aroma Austin never forgot; and he appeared before the portico of a long, low, white colonnaded house.

Austin dismounted and pulled the bell at the front door; its reluctant clangor reverberated as through an empty house. The many minutes that elapsed indicated little habitude of visits; Austin was quite willing to wait there, and he did not ring again. At last there was a sound of shuffling steps, the door groaned open, and there appeared an old white-headed negro, shabby and of courtly manners.

"Mrs Warfield is at home, sir. Miss Ravenel has not yet arrived."

"Not arrived?"

The butler pulled a wire and the boom of a great bell startled Austin; it was hung in the branches of a huge sycamore that stood in the cobblestoned courtyard beyond the archway that led under the second story of the long house, to the servants' offices; its

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clamor might easily have been heard across the valley for half a mile or more.

As the butler evidently expected it, Austin suffered himself to be inducted into a vast drawing-room, where the butler brought him cake and wine; it was dark with mahogany; its unpainted wooden floor hardly relieved by rugs, its walls almost bare of furniture; altogether it had the look of an apartment that had been stripped in times of war; only, there were many sombre family portraits in the panels, portraits that would not have relieved the gloom but for the scarlet, the buff and blue, and, later still, the blue and gold, of the uniforms they represented. One, the latest of all, was a very young man in the dress of an American naval officer of the War of 1812; the placard bore the lettering "Commodore Ravenel, U. S. N. Born July 11, 1784. Died in August, 1816." A commodore at thirty-two! There was also a painting of a small ship, almost a pinnace, evidently done from memory or imagination, for the Pillars of Hercules were indicated on either side and, in the background, a stormy Atlantic. It bore the legend "U. S. sloop of war *Hornet*. Sailed from Tripoli with dispatches August 2, 1816; never reported." Then there were portraits of Rutledges, Raouls, one of a Warfield, also in the navy. But it was evidently a Ravenel

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house. And there was one—a beautiful Copley—fine as any Sir Joshua, but with the strange New-World delicacy that was all his own—of a Miss Rolf Ravenel, “granddaughter of Princess Pocahontas.” The present Miss Ravenel had much her look, thought Austin, when, hearing the rustle of a silk dress, he rose to see, as he felt sure, the original before him. No, that was of course impossible—a granddaughter again, perhaps. Yet she was very old, certainly eighty, but with eyes as brightly black, dress as coquettishly perfect, neck as snowy, where it showed, as any older French marquise or (though a touch more *soigné*, perhaps) of any girl’s of seventeen. She dropped a little courtesy, and Pinckney ceremoniously bowed.

“You are welcome to Ravenel, Mr Pinckney, welcome as any Pinckney would be, but you are doubly so, for my daughter has spoken much of you.”

Pinckney’s face burned. He turned away to look at the picture.

“That is my father.” Her father! “He was never heard of again. You see, I was married at fifteen—and, you must know, I am nearing ninety. I call Mary my daughter; of course she is only my granddaughter. Her mother was not married as young as I.”

Nearing ninety! Was it the French charm, the

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old Huguenot blood, that made this slender little bright-eyed lady lovable yet? Austin turned from her to the picture with the air of one who reverentially salutes. "You are fortunate in having the picture, Mrs Warfield."

"Yes, when the British captured Washington they left us little else. Of course, at that time, the portrait of Commodore Raveland had not been painted. But the Yankees were here, in sixty-one and in sixty-three."

"Your father is wearing blue," said Pinckney.

"Well said, my young friend, and I know your family sided with the North. But I know that your great-grandfather refused to go with his father to England and join the Tories. And he used to run away at night—to mount guard with the Continental soldiers at Annapolis. Jared Sparks, the Yankee, tells us that."

"Massachusetts and Virginia made the war," said Austin.

"And South Carolina—you and I may say so."

"There is little left of my family. My three sisters are much older than I and their children are all German. My wife and I have no children." Austin spoke with the faintest possible stress, which, it seemed, the old lady noticed; for, as if to put him at his ease, she answered:

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“I knew that you were married, but I did not know you had no children. Well, well, there are to be no Ravenels any more—and Miles Warfield was the last of his race—better so than to have a line run down as did the Breeses. You know, Miles Breese was my daughter’s cousin. I must frankly tell you that I abhor him.”

“Miss Ravenel seems devoted.”

“He is her father. He is only my son-in-law. And I hated him from the time I made my daughter marry him. That was my remorse. My daughter had some fantastic remorse of her own for having left him, or for having divorced him, after her boy died. The Warfields, you know, are gentle, easy-going people, and very religious. They think divorcing is sinful. We Ravenels think it only unnecessary.” And the old lady’s dark eyes flashed. It was easy to see where Miss Ravenel got her spirit from.

Austin rose to go. “I am so sorry not to see Miss Ravenel.”

“What? Nothing of the sort. Of course, you are going to spend the night. Mary came on to-day, I know—she has stopped in Baltimore about some of her classes—her poor people. She will be out by the evening train.”

A night beneath her roof! But as Austin felt his heart’s blood rush to his heart, his head resolved.

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“I fear it is quite impossible. I have nothing with me”—so do clothes protect us, in this world!

“Well, come out to-morrow; you must give us a day at least.”

“If my business permits; I may have to go back to New York.” The excuse, from a South Carolina Pinckney to a Ravenel, did not sound convincing.

“Fiddle-de-dee! my daughter tells me you have been of so much service—and now this Allegheny Railroad trouble—she wrote me last night that you were our attorney.”

(Last night! She was thinking about him, then, last night—just when he was flying through the Jersey woods—it was only yesterday, he still wore the faded rose he had pinned in while lunching with her—she must have written immediately after he had left her in the doorway.)

“I shall try to,” said Austin. “I really will—I will telegraph.”

A mile from the home, galloping, he passed an ancient vehicle, creaking up the hill. Alone in the back seat sat Miss Ravenel. He turned and greeted her.

“I am so glad to see you,” she said. “I thought you would come. But why did you come so soon? You are not going?”

In the dusk, he could hardly see her face. He

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strained his eyes to hers—only her voice came to him, cool and gentle. Really, it was hardly fair to count this.

“I must—I must get back to Baltimore.” Bravely he made the fight. “I have told Mrs Warfield perhaps I can come out to-morrow.”

“I hope you will—good night.”

The greatest resolution of Austin Pinckney’s life now vanished.

“I will,” he said.

“Come in the morning—I want to show you Ravenel.”

Late in the evening, at the Chesapeake Club, the porter handed Austin a card. It was “Mr Markoff” in all its proud isolation of any Christian name. Mr Markoff had not yet the *entrée* of a Maryland club, it appeared, so Austin consented to return to the hotel.

“Austin, old man, we play cards down. I don’t mind admitting you’ve made a score. Now, I think I can make a proposition, if you’ll tell me what you mean to do.”

The American winced a little, but said: “We have made no secret of what we want. We hold the meeting void, and both the stock issue and the guaranty illegal.”

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"The stock issue, after all, has been voted by the president and directors, and the contract with Allegheny Pacific is legal. Tamms was undoubtedly president of the Pacific, and the fact that he was not then president of the Central only makes the deal look still further all right—the new preferred stock has passed into the hands of innocent purchasers."

"Tamms and his pledgees," said Austin dryly.

"Well, among others, the Chesapeake Trust Company of Baltimore. His largest loan is there. If you cancel the preferred stock, you'll ruin him."

"And if we don't, we'll ruin ten thousand old stockholders, who got their money honestly, and who can't make a new *coup*, as he can. Did he not ruin old Mr Townley?"

"Oh, I see," said Markoff. "That old story—well, if Gresham's in it—" The wily Hebrew made a *volte-face*. "Tell you what, Austin—suppose I throw up the sponge on the preferred stock?" Austin observed the single pronoun.

"What do you want?" said he.

"You to keep quiet for a week. Time."

"I'll tell you to-morrow, at ten o'clock."

Before going to bed Austin telegraphed Gresham: "Chesapeake Trust Company largest lender security preferred stock; shall secure it; also much common;

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telegraph bank to give certified check \$205,000.”
• That is what the cipher *meant*; what it *said* was: “Chesapeake depravest Martha hog also Mary wire Maryland give me certified check palimpsest palanquin.”

At ten o'clock Markoff came to Austin's parlor, where he found Miss Aylwin with a typewriting machine. “You won't object to a witness at our interview,” Austin said. “I've decided to agree to a week's truce if you'll sign a paper agreeing to have these votes reconsidered at the special meeting, by the directors and stockholders as well. I also want you, as Tamms's attorney, to sign a paper agreeing that each lot of collateral shall stand as security for any or all of his loans held by my client, the Miners' Bank.”

Markoff looked at Austin, but said nothing.

“Miss Aylwin will prepare the paper, and you can sign it. I must go now—I have an engagement.” A telegraph boy came in with a dispatch. Austin opened it; it was not in cipher, and he threw it over to Markoff. It read:

“Market opened panicky. Central weak; no quotations Pacific. Return if possible to-day.”

“Do you mind my sending this answer?” asked Markoff. He wrote on a blank sheet of paper:

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"Hold up everything for a week. Possible agreement with Tamms party."

"I see no objection," said Austin, as he gave the message to the telegraph boy. Only, he had added the words "impossible return before to-morrow."

Austin went around to the Maryland Bank and got his certified check for \$205,000; then to the Chesapeake Trust Company, where Miss Aylwin awaited him. "He has signed it," she said, "both papers." Austin took the one relating to the holding of collateral and put the other in his pocket. Then, Miss Aylwin with him, he entered the treasurer's private office.

"Mr McTavish, I have come to take up that loan of Tamms," he said. "I think you said, with interest, it amounted to over two hundred and four thousand dollars."

"Two hundred and four thousand six hundred and sixty-six," said Mr McTavish. "We consider it amply secured, even should the new preferred stock be held void, but we are always happy to oblige the Miners' Bank. Here is the list, 20,000 shares new preferred; that's the trimming; 2,050 shares old common, and that's the beef."

"Have you got the securities?" Austin spoke not impatiently, but he was evidently in a hurry.

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“They are here.” McTavish handed over one long envelope. “I must endorse Tamms’s note ‘without recourse.’”

“Miss Aylwin, you will take these stocks and the note, and carry them to the Maryland Bank to hold for order of the Miners’ Bank of New York. I suppose you can give Miss Aylwin an escort?”

“Surely, our most trusted messenger.” They left the room. Austin breathed a sigh. The extra collateral on this loan made the Miners’ Bank secure. Then, as he was taking his leave, the teller’s door opened.

“Mr Markoff, sir—” The clerk stopped as he saw Pinckney.

“You may go on, Roberts.”

“Mr Markoff, sir, has called with a certified check to take up that \$200,000 loan of Phineas Tamms & Co.”

“Tell him he is too late,” said Mr McTavish. “Good-by, Mr Pinckney.” And as he met Pinckney’s eye, the canny McTavish treated himself to one discreet smile. It laid Pinckney under an obligation.

Austin caught his train. He had had no lunch, and when he arrived at Ravenel it was nearly three o’clock. She met him at the doorway. “My grandmother always rests in the afternoon,” she said, “but

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your room is ready. I thought we should like best to go to walk? We have no horses, you know. But perhaps first you would like some lunch?"

"I have had my lunch," lied Austin.

Miss Ravenel led the way under the archway, through the courtyard where was the great sycamore tree.

"The great bell in the first branch is the old 'slave' bell. It is still rung to call in our servants when we need them."

"I have heard it," said Austin.

Now they passed under an archway of clipped box and stood within a rectangular garden. In the four corners were wonderful Japanese yews; the flowers in this garden were kept up, and beautifully.

"It is mine," said Miss Ravenel. "You know grandma cannot afford to hire labor. In the old days many of the men that had been slaves used to come and work in the gardens for love, but they are nearly all gone now. You see her father's name is still carried on the navy records, and although he was only an ensign when he was lost, grandma gets a commodore's pension."

Austin asked how that might be.

"A naval officer of the United States is not to be presumed to have lost his ship. The loss of the *Hornet* has never been reported. So great-grandpa's

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name was duly given its promotion by seniority until the retiring age."

All winds were stilled within this garden, and as the two stood together by an old sundial, the warm Maryland sun brought out the diverse perfume of the flowers against the all-pervading, warm, strong scent of the box hedges. When they ceased speaking no sound was heard except the humming of the bees.

Austin had no desire to say anything. He was content to watch the lovely girl; she was simply dressed in a gray skirt and shoes for walking, and the long slim waist of dainty muslin seemed to him a more beautiful covering than any ball dress he had ever seen. Perhaps it was the shade of the broad Leghorn hat that enabled her to look so straight before her with wide-opened eyes. Austin felt his own as if dazzled, and he looked down at the dial, under pretext of reading the motto. There was a motto; and it was charming:

"—Venit quæ non sperabitur hora."

"I shall never forget it—the hour never looked for comes," said he.

"Or, the weather will be finer than you expect," laughed Miss Ravenel. "The charm of Latin mot-

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toes is, they may mean so many things." And she bent her lissome figure, so quickly that the man had not time to stoop, to clip a blossom of gardenia. "Does it not remind you of a ballroom? I hate it, in a ballroom; I grow it here on purpose. It makes me so glad I am not there!" and she stretched the flower out to him to smell. He drew a long breath or two, but avoided asking for it, and she pinned it to her dress. They were going now by one of the old mills; its overshot wheel lay still under its layer of green moss, and the shining drops tinkled musically as they fell upon the rotting wood. One side of the great stone wall was torn out and fallen, as if by a shell. He asked if it was done in the war.

"No, I did it myself with gunpowder," said the girl simply. "We needed the stones for the avenue. Laurel Run *will* wash it away in the floods. This is Laurel Run; there is the old stillhouse; that marble-rimmed pool beside the brook that comes down from the Hanging Wood was meant for a bath, before the days of indoor plumbing."

"I should love to bathe there still," said he.

"You may if you like, and get up early enough before breakfast. I tried it once but there were too many water spiders," laughed she. "This is called the Wood Walk; it runs for nearly half a mile along the run and the trees have never been cut down.

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They say that Lafayette was very fond of it and he and Washington and Count Marbois used to come here to tea. That's why that is called the Lafayette Circle."

She pointed to the retaining wall, which ran all along the steep hill on the upper side of the path, and here was hollowed out into a semicircle in which were three stone seats.

"There is a 'salon de Mirabeau' in Auvergne," said Austin, "but I am sure it served no such harmless purpose."

"The British didn't think this was harmless," said she. "It's only a day's march from here to the Brandywine. See, here the laurel begins already." They were getting now into a veritable mountain gorge; the stream was roaring at their feet and the interspaces of the dark forest were rosy with the laurel through which the girl glided, beautiful as that girl of the Parthenon stele, stooping to tie her sandal. But Austin was sternly refusing himself the thought of the girl's beauty.

"You will not mind a good long walk?" she said. "I do so love it—the first time I come here after the long New York winter."

Austin said he would not mind a good long walk.

"That reminds me," she said; "I have read one of those books, the only one I could get at the book-

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store near the station, and it isn't about a factory girl at all; it's about a duchess."

"Why should factory girls wish to read about factory girls?"

"Well, they would, if the stories were properly written. What we want for them is a Balzac—a Balzac with a heart."

"Won't Howells do?"

"Howells is too ladylike," she laughed. "Women are women, as men are men, and it would do them good to be told so. But this duchess book has just the same trouble I find in the girls themselves—it hasn't any ideals except diamonds and display, and they won't believe that we have, either."

"Send them to Newport," said Austin sadly. Something in his tone struck the young girl, and for the first time she looked at him, as it were, personally.

"No," she said softly, "we must go to them." Then after a minute (she was leading, leaping lightly from one mossy step to another, so that her white waist made a glimmering in the steep valley wood) she turned lightly in her tread and "with the upper foot so pressed that the lower was the firmer" looked at him. "Would you like to go with me to our little factory? I called it ours, but it is only a little water-power with a nook of land that General Rav-

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enel gave to some Hessians who were too poor to go home after the Revolution. But to get there we must go down to the road and climb back again." She seemed to need no answer, but turned downward; here there was no path, but she sprang easily from one ledge to another, scorning his hand; Austin followed, looking at her; now and then she would turn and look up at him, smiling; at such moments Austin's heart passed through all the grades of happiness.

"It is the multitudes that are misled. I want you to see the mill girls here. It is the vast aggregation of such in cities that seems to crush all to a coarse uniformity—necessary, I suppose."

"Markets, cheaper railway rates, power, are the causes; electricity promises much but fails to fulfill as yet. I had hoped to see the time when a little thread of wire would carry into every working woman's home the brute force necessary for her skilled labor, and so all could live at home, and in the country."

"They would not do it," said she. "Even here, where the conditions are so perfect—for we are near enough to cart the few materials, and the product (they make watches) is so valuable that the rail rates do not count—I have trouble sometimes in persuading the young girls to stay." By this time they

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had stepped down out of the forest onto the level valley road; Austin noted gladly that the sun was still some hours high; before them lay a picturesque long stone mill, beside it a flume and a pretty pool into which a waterfall some sixty feet in height fell churning. The little dell was full of ferns and flowers, and as they entered the main great room of the factory the girls all looked up with joyous salutation. "It is my first visit this year," said Miss Ravenel, "but they cannot leave their work to speak to us while the machinery is running."

Some forty young women with a few elder ones (they were the widows, she said) were in the room; the air was pure, the windows all open, on most of the window sills a bunch of flowers; the flaxen braids of the younger still showed their Saxon origin; they were all neat and wholesome looking, if not handsome, and wore cool-looking shirtwaists as dainty as Mary Ravenel's own.

"The few men needed do the heavy work, tend the machinery, pack and unpack; the girls prefer to have them work in another room—it leaves them freer. We will ask the superintendent to stop the wheel a moment. The old overshot wheel I could stop myself; but we had to give it up for a modern turbine. I loved it so, though, that I got it disconnected and leave it be for the looks of it." As

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the wheels revolved more slowly and the shafting slacked, the operatives all clustered around Mary Ravenel. Austin stood apart and looked on—then he was introduced to a few, the *élite* who did only handwork; the engravers, who designed monograms and inscriptions.

“I rejoice,” said Austin as they walked away, “that they can still compete with the trust.”

“They have an old trade-mark and reputation—the Laurel Run watches. Many people still will be at pains to get them. After all, a hand-made watch is best. But they do now have to buy their cases. Mr Köllner tells me he is afraid they will try to force them to join the trust, and the first thing the trust would do is to abandon these works entirely—the trust doesn’t want handwork.”

“The highest economy of management being, so far as possible, to eliminate the human element,” said Pinckney grimly.

“Perhaps some higher taste will want it back. Now, Mr Pinckney, that speech came from Wall Street—at Laurel Run we are human and happy.” The girl was climbing nimbly through the ferns; Austin followed, but stumbling more, for he would keep his eyes fixed on hers, so that now and then, as she looked downward over her shoulder to him, he could see them smile.

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“Surely,” she went on, “all that humanity needs is knowledge of the higher good, of what is really good, really valuable—and God has so arranged it that the making of the really good is never labor that degrades. The tilling of fields, the sailing of ships, the fashioning of beautiful things by hand and eye alone, this is good; the mining of metals, the forging of cannon, the sitting at a crowded bench to aid a machine turn out cheap imitation jewelry, shoddy, vulgar-patterned carpets, noxious chemicals to be utilized again in unwholesome processes, this is bad.”

“Ruskin was a seer, but he was not omniscient. How about sweatshops, paper mills, shoe factories? Sweatshops are home labor, and there is no machinery. Paper you must have in any earthly millenium. Would you go back to the cobbler and his bench?”

Miss Ravenel laughed. “We might at least get another Hans Sachs. And I am not sure there is not something inherently meretricious about clothes. As to wood pulp, I don’t care for Sunday newspapers and I *do* prefer it in its original condition of primeval forest!” But Austin wanted to be graver.

“‘Knowledge of thy truth,’” he quoted. “It is all we need. Perhaps, after all, we are in a transition stage. Even Carnegie libraries may bring us some of it.”

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“And that service which alone is perfect freedom. Not the freedom your poor city mill girls wanted.”

“Is there such a thing as free will?”

“If there is no free will, there is no freedom.”

“Malebranche said that all causal volition was but the direct interposition of God. And Leibnitz said that a stone, falling through the air, if conscious, would think it did it of its own free will.”

“I never read any philosophy,” said the girl, “but I should say that the stone would be perfectly right.”

The man looked at the young woman in wonder. “You have anticipated Spinoza’s rejoinder.”

“Gravitation is but inclination, and conscious inclination is desire, will, attraction, love; the will to serve is the love of God.”

“But what do you tell your class girls?”

“To those that have a church, I say that. To others, I respect their agnosticism, but I—surely you can say ” (Miss Ravenel went on, modestly correcting herself), “you can say with—who was it?—Amiel?—‘I do not know what others are—I am emerald. My duty is to be emerald.’ Or you can say, each rod of iron has a love for north; therefore we say, there is some great source and end of the love we call a magnet’s; we do not think of denying the

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magnetic north. So each one of us, some more, some less, far down below the day desires, have still a love of good, an inclination for goodness; somewhere, therefore, is a well spring and a source and an end of goodness. Thither we will; and the will is the love of God; and its conscious service is perfect freedom."

Had they gone down now (Austin later thought) would consequences have been altered? Why was it willed otherwise? *They* did not so will; by some virginal instinct in each they had kept, as it were, in the realms of pure reason, an instinct perhaps beginning to be conscious on the man's part, as he looked at her wonderful face, rosy with enthusiasm of her speech, her clear eyes blazing.—But he did not meet them, this time, and was saved. They came now out on a crag of limestone where all the world around was lower land; they sat together, she looking far out to the purple horizon, he, now, looking at her. How long they talked he never knew; it was when the waning light grew like the light of autumn; they had spoken of Dante, how he had anticipated even what they had been saying, that he was the greatest of them all. Austin told how he had been in factories—in Latin countries—where the mill girls hired readers to read aloud—the classics, Dante, Cervantes. When would that be at Nauchester? And she had said she thought the girls at Laurel Run would like

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—if not Dante—Heine, Uhland, Longfellow. He found she knew her Dante well; the “Vita Nuova,” the precursor of all our higher, Christian love tales; something even of his life. So they were led to talking of Beatrice, of her marriage, of Dante’s marriage, of his later loves. But Austin now was watching her face; as the purple shadows came upward from the valley his look became more absorbed; the white figure grew but a shimmer in the shadows of the laurels; he looked down, too, at her white, ringless hands.

“It is really late, now. I must go. I am so sorry. I have never met anyone with whom I thought so much alike.” It was she who spoke. The ungrammatical little sentence was slipping out so carelessly, when his eyes leaped up to hers—and there was one long look between them. No word was said. The gardenia at her breast fluttered a little. The clear amethyst of her eyes changed, as he looked, to that dim, cloudy blue. Austin turned away as he said:

“Dante *never* loved anyone else. But she refused him her salutation.”

Miss Ravenel made no answer; she was leading the way rapidly through the now dark wood. But the light was now flooding through the man’s whole soul. After a minute again he spoke.

LAUREL MOUNTAIN



"They came now out on a crag where all the world around
was lower land."

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“Whatever they may tell you, Miss Ravenel, remember—the lady from Genoa lied.” There was a choking end to this sentence. Had she heard it? He stumbled over a bush. He would say nothing more; she did not. At last, when she spoke, it was to ask him, in the open road, how soon he was to leave Baltimore.

“In a day or two—not to-morrow. My wife does not come home till Wednesday. We are to be at Beverly this summer.” This speech was willed, and Austin expected the conventional rejoinder, but the girl made none. He became conscious of a chilling air now, that swept upward through the gorge. He became very faint. He could hardly see his guide before him. He resolved that in the box garden he would stop. “May I have a gardenia?”

She watched him stoop to cut one and threw hers away; it was already (she pointed out in the light of the doorway) brown at the edges; then, as she looked, for the first time, at his face, she cried out, “Why, you look faint!” and indeed our hero had collapsed upon a chair.

“The fact is, I didn’t eat—I didn’t eat enough lunch,” he said, laughing. But the girl’s matronly instinct now prevailed; he was a boy, in need of nursing; she darted about for cakes and sherry.

“You must drink it at once.” She sat beside

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him on the old horsehair dining-room seat and looked merrily over the glass of brown sherry. Austin broke the bread and drank the wine. But with his strength came back the veil between them. Mrs Warfield made the brightness of the dinner table. She asked if they had talked out their business. "Not yet," said Austin. "I don't think we talked any business at all," said the girl.

But (some fairy, I suppose, or kindly heathen goddess, holding the scales to his eyes) Austin was happy as he had never dreamed that happiness could be. He did not ask why; he did not even reflect that questions might come in the morning; he was sitting at her table, breaking her bread, beside her so that he with his natural look had her face in his vision, her presence at his side. And every word she spoke was moulded in his memory as a footprint in a clay that turns to rock.

After dinner, pretexting his cigar, he walked into the garden and searched for the gardenia she had cast away; he put it in his coat instead of the one he wore; she would not notice it.

"You will not mind," he said to her, "if I walk out in the garden a little more?" By no means—she was very tired, she was going to bed; breakfast was at eight—he might come in when he liked, for the garden door was never locked. "I hope we did not

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walk too far," said Austin. Miss Ravenel apparently did not hear; she was kissing her grandmother good night.

"Your candle will be upon the stairs," said the old lady.

Pinckney went out. The warm scent of the box still was there that he had known that day; through the trees he heard the tinkle of the old mill wheel, the murmur of the stream where he had walked with her. That night must never end; so long as he prolonged it, it was still the day when he had been with her. The very clothes he wore were those that he had worn when with her. So he smoked, and did not think—he did not have to think—and walked about her gardens. Only at the dawn did he go to his room. But it was only to take his bath, don his morning clothes, and then, fresh-eyed as the morn itself, hie him up the path where he had been with her. Far up he climbed, fixing the trail in his memory, up to the very rock where he had sat with her—the grass still pressed where she had stood, the birch still bent against which he had leaned. The morning was over the world, and he saw that it was good; he loved her, and he saw that it was good.

But coming down, the butler bade him breakfast alone, and after it appeared Mrs Warfield, unwont-

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edly early, as she said, for her. But she could not let him breakfast alone, and her daughter had been suddenly called to Baltimore, while he was out on his morning walk. And Austin's heart, which had been rich with the treasure of the coming hours, closed suddenly its doors—oh, was this all, was this all? Was it all over? Back in the forest he asked himself this; then his pulse seemed to give one thrill and was silent, like a man, thrown from his horse, who lies upon the field and does not rise.

It was all *forever* over.

And love was. Love was, and it was such as this—love elemental, always, eternal, immutable. No one had told him it could be like this. Not even Dante. He had looked at those around him, and discoursed of it, fluently, boylike. And it was Mary Ravenel. O God, how he loved her! Nay—he was no other thing than her. He *was* her. And at the roots of the birch tree, he murmured her name, over and over again, Mary—Mary—Mary Ravenel. Why had she left? He knew. He knew. Was not his soul now hers. And, O Mary, mother of all mercies, why? It might have been.

And the great strong fellow lay, his face in the fern leaves, and cried like any child. So, convulsively, he sobbed, and his tears rained through the mosses,—Have you lost your respect for him, my

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lady reader? Why, Homer's heroes cried. True, in all his life had never Killian Van Kull, nor, I suppose, Guy Livingstone, nor any hero of historical romance. But I must tell the truth of Austin Pinckney as he always told it to himself—nor, moreover, did I give him to you as a hero—just a man. But so, if you will, henceforth I give him up to you, a broken hero. . . .

But nevermore he lied to himself. There was no weak self-deception about his love for Mary Ravenel. True, he loved her, as the moth the star, the pine the palm, the soul the spirit; but he also loved her as a man a woman. He could not, if he would, lie himself out of that.

When his tears stopped, he spent the morning hours trying to remember her face. In the afternoon, he took his leave; before her return, as (he could feel) she had willed.

But so it had been willed that these two should meet—willed in that realm where, and where alone,

“That can be which is willed.”

BOOK THREE

(She.) *Durch Mitleid wissend. . . .*

(He.) . . . *Selig im Glauben.*

XXXV

MARY RAVENEL, like the princess of an enchanted palace, had been brought up in a dream. The dream was her mother's; and Ravenel itself was a better setting for it than any Doré has yet drawn. For Mrs Breese's one idea had been to preserve her daughter from any real entanglement until the ideal should arrive; her own history had bred in her a horror, not only of the arranged marriage, but even the boy-and-girl unions, marriages of mere propinquity, accouplements of dawning sex, that are the delight of the Greek lyrist, but were in her eyes fraught with the seeds of tragedy. Miles Breese himself had been a handsome fellow, not without the high light of romance, when, a girl, she saw him portrayed in the centre of her field of vision, in love with her; no young girl but is moved at the mention of such a state, more perhaps when told by others, whispered by his sisters, hinted at compassionately by mothers or girl friends, than when the pining swain opens his own lips. I doubt if Miles Breese even at five-and-twenty had made a very persuasive suitor; but he was handsome, rich, content enough to take over this beautiful girl as he would add a beautiful thoroughbred to his stable. Many

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a day was he busied wholly with his racing stable while others took the pains to speak for him to Mary Warfield; he was depicted a very Orlando wandering in the forest, when the hard facts found him tipping at road houses with the men—or women—that fast horses breed. For it is a truth indeed that, if men can train horses, horses, more subtly, train the men who live with them. Mary's mother, ambitious of the match, discreetly stood aside; only, at the hesitating moment, letting Mary know (not in so many words) what her wishes were. For theirs was a great tradition, a great name, but they were poor. And why, thought Mrs Warfield, should not even a Ravenel marry Miles Breese? He was the best man in Baltimore. Mary liked his roses, she liked his own looks, then; her girl's heart would beat a little faster when she heard the thunder of his horses' hoofs upon the Ravenel avenue, and this (they told her) was love, and so she accepted it—and him. Then, as has been elsewhere told, came that summer at Newport and her meeting with Charles Austin Pinckney. A look too long—a book or two given, a word exchanged—and their lives were ended. She had never repined.

But old Mrs Warfield grew cynical and French, in her later years, when her daughter's life seemed to her to be wrecked. Mary, a simpler and perhaps a stronger nature, turned to heaven, and kept her

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dreams. Under these auspices our heroine (Dorothy, for the moment, is at Tuxedo) was born. Then came the divorce—necessary, said the family, for her own self-respect; necessary, said her mother and Mr Gresham, whom they much trusted, for her own subsistence and the child's future. It was just after their only son's death, in 1877, that she consented. Since the war, Ravenel in Maryland was but an expense. Ravenel in South Carolina was gone. Mrs Breese brought the child home alone from Baden-Baden. Old Mrs Warfield could not afford governesses; there were, of course, no schools. And so the child Mary had come to be educated in the old library. There were no American novels later than Brockden Brown; there was Bulwer, but not Dickens; little of any other fiction save Scott; no Fielding, Smollett, or Aphra Behn; only Richardson and some German romances; for old Commodore Warfield had that shrinking from gross speech peculiar to Southern gentlemen before the war. A story which many a man to-day will tell to women at a dinner party would have made him blush like a girl or, perhaps, to hide his embarrassment, cause a duel with the raconteur. For with their pistols they were never embarrassed, these old gentlemen; they were very simple-hearted, but not to be played with; where, outside of a certain district in Castile, had the world

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yet seen their like? We shall miss them, when we have leisure.

Then came the time when Miles, too, was ruined; his social adventuress left him for a chocolate manufacturer; she had taken most of his fortune and, for the time, his good spirits; he felt very ill and lonely and wrote to his abandoned wife a letter. She would not forgive him. But men like Breese are not to be killed by their emotions; convalescent, he wrote her another letter announcing his immediate departure for the devil. Once well started, he proceeded on that road more rapidly than should have been expected in a gentleman of his years. He sought, and desired, disgrace. It is the very flagrancy of the sin that stimulates a flagging Tarquin; the shame, the lust of hell, that goads a Cellini or a Sade. And this may go with kindness; we know that Bluebeard—the historical Gilles de Retz—was devoted to Joan of Arc. “*His private life*”—strange no Balzac, no Tolstoi, yet has chosen this title—Miles Breese’s private life may here be no more than indicated. Sometimes he got money—then he would seek to flaunt himself into his wife’s notice: difficult enough, in her seclusion at Ravenel, but he found friends to bear the news—at other times he lived a Villon lyric—he had not the spirituality, even, of a Verlaine. It was at this period that

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Mary Warfield sinned. For (she was a South Carolinian, and *dévoté* to boot: to her, her “divorce” was no divorce, but a legal arrangement to prevent persecution—it is only a few years since a lady, lawfully divorced in New York for no fault of her own, was refused the *entrée* of the St. Cecilia ball at Charleston) she wrote a letter to Charles Pinckney at Carlsruhe. He replied; it led to an interchange of a few books, nothing more; then she begged for silence, and their silence lasted to the grave. Neither of them even knew which died first.

It was in the remorse of this sin, kept secret even from her own mother (who, Huguenot and French that she was, had probably made little of it) that Mary Warfield conveyed vaguely to her daughter the impression of Miles as of one suffering, erring, sinned against. Dying, she had half-charged her daughter not to desert her father. He has been very wicked, she would say, but we were both to blame. Secretly, perhaps, she felt she had done wrong to marry him. Abstract wickedness is not, to a young girl, a definite phrase. And the old grandmother, who might have scoffed the notion out of her head, was on this one point humble; too heartbroken at the misery caused by her own worldly plans to venture ever again to direct a young girl's heart.

Insensibly, however, it had reacted. Her father,

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to the young girl, stood for the modern man; and if she did not visualize all the flaws in his composition, she at least knew that it was but a poor, weak clay. Thus it came about that the men she read of in Malory, in Spenser—heroes of a poet's dream—she recognized as of the stuff that dreams are made of; the men of real life she recognized in old plays, or, at their best, in the people of St. Ronan's Well, in Pelham or Pendennis.

She had met few young men in New York, none as yet in Baltimore, to disabuse her of this impression; for the former city was already turning to that continental civilization of which it boasts. John Haviland represented a previous generation; moreover, her father's affiliations, such as they were, had thrown her with the most fashionable set, with those who would in a lower walk of life have been termed "sporting" people; with the creoles, French, German, Cubans, all imported in the nineteenth century to make their fortunes, not, as in the earlier two, to secure (so we are told) civil or religious liberty. His lot lay with the Rastacqs, Einsteins, Duvals—not with the Dutch Breviers, the colonial Philipsses, or the later, New England-born, American families. A fortunate introduction of old Mr Gresham's had indeed brought her to the Havilands, with whom she had immediate sympathy; leaving them out, "Lucie"

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Gower (she would probably have said) was the best man type she had encountered in New York—in what is called “Society.” And Lucie, honest fellow, was no Admirable Crichton nor yet a Sidney, though a very *parfait gentleman* in his way.

Without any pose, even to herself, therefore, she had seen (resolved, made up her mind, are phrases too expressive of a conscious determination) that she should never marry. Thus it came about that she had rather lost her interest in the upper ten; without attempting any breadwinning vocation (for, like a Southerner, she assumed that a lady necessarily had an income) she found her interest in the study, in the service, of the lower million. In the vulgar phrase, she never “thought about young men.”

She had been interested in young Pinckney very much indeed. She liked him; but more than that, she felt a latent strength, an ability, even a heart, which might accomplish ends she saw, but which her own sex prevented her from attaining. She was casually aware that he was married, but gave the matter not a second thought; it was not a thing that concerned her. If, indeed, his wife could be to them all that Gracie was—could share in their work, hers and her friends’, as Gracie did—but something, her own knowledge of the Duval-Rastacq set,

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or a paragraph she chanced upon in the *Times*, made her know that this might not be.

Her own pathway in life seemed quite clear to her. If there was a doubt—despite her half-Catholic ancestry—it was on religious matters. And this doubt, merely intellectual, never disturbed her peace. “I must be emerald.” Whatever truth God chose to withhold from our full knowledge in this world, the duty of man or woman was plain enough; and with it went the duty to believe, to hope, the duty to be happy. Yet never had her assurance—perhaps, before then, vague, or at least undefined—been put in words to her so clearly as by Mr Pinckney on that yesterday. It was in the frank leap of her heart with sympathy on this that her eyes, too little self-conscious, had fallen to his and seen suddenly the open chamber of his soul. She had seen a moment of hush, of awe at the awakening, a look in his wide-open eyes like a deer’s when first he hears the horn; then, with a fear now in her own, the awe give place to the full radiance that streamed in every chamber of his heart. As yet innocent, the man’s eyes stayed still and open, deeply simple, looking no afterthought, struck motionless, with yet no thought of after-things. She had seen the annunciation of his love. And then, first, she had turned her own eyes away. She had seen too much; and for all the mists that she might

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weave between them, the sight might never go. So it came about that while in his heart there was still nothing but the awe of happiness, there came in hers a horror at what she had done. Yes, done; she tried, in the night, to think it otherwise, to persuade herself that she had erred in believing that his ecstasy had in any way been personal, individual, growing from the nearness of her—but she could not. Both these two, of many other things they had in common, could not deceive themselves. Like Dante at Beatrice's first salutation, she had seen "his soul pass all the bournes of ecstasy." In one lightning flash she had read not only that he loved her, but that he knew he loved her—read it, all in his eyes unaware. And then she had turned her own away. And while she slept, of a tear or two in her long lashes her spirit set itself to weave its mists.

XXXVI

WAKEFUL at dawn, the girl lay in her bed, glad of the darkness of her room, so red she felt her face when she thought of their position; then the woman in her would have its turn and she would feel that, after all, the visit might be lived through. She had perfect confidence in his breeding,

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in his self-restraint. She knew well that not again while he was under her roof would he show to her that he had come to be in love with her. But there! and now again the woman smiled as the girl blushed—as if every modulation of his voice, every tremor of his mouth, the very aversion of his eyes, did not tell her, more importunately than any words, and he all unaware. Of one thing, indeed, she was certain: his inclination (so she euphemized it to herself) must be hastily destroyed, eradicated—could he, would he, do it, of himself? An instinct told her the negative. And so, in the morning, the girl arose—a woman. And, with a woman's swift decision, she went away.

But if it was the girl again who galloped to the station, it was the woman who reflected, on the train to Baltimore, that perhaps all which must now never be said, or even, from that day on, in her own thoughts, admitted, was emphasized, and emphasized even to him, by this very action on her part. What would he think of her? It had been understood that he was to leave that morning, but nothing had been said about her going away; moreover, he was going by a later train, and her grandmother never came down till noonday. She doubtless could be trusted to make some explanation, but Miss Ravenel did not care to have her have to. And the granddaughter

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never under any circumstances whatever told even the whitest of lies. If things had so come about even that Pinckney had asked her, on this very morning, if she had seen his love for her, she would have answered that she had. So that if, on the one hand, it had been absolutely necessary to leave him (almost of this, now, the woman in her doubted), it was vitally so that he should not put the true construction on it. He must never know—never know on earth—that she had seen so deeply into his heart.

But there was no train back to Ravenel that morning, and at this very moment, perhaps, there was coming to Austin alone in the shadowed valley that “mist of tears and a blinding rain” whereafter, says Macdonald, life is never the same again. Mary Ravenel half-knew it. Some cry of the wounded rang even to her heart’s core. But she (so doubtless that Maiden of Florence of whom to Dante his vision spoke:

“She is born who, though not yet her hair is up, my city shall endear”—

how strangely modern the grim poet’s words echo down that stair of countless yesterdays!—she knew wholly that the only cure lay in the knife. For women are trained, almost from infancy, to read men; a girl, for her own protection, must understand, not what

a man says, but what he means. It is those, alas! who do not, that play the fool. While, as to those who do so read and use their knowledge wrongly—what shall we call their “play”? Of neither class had God created Mary Ravenel.

But, if the girl had used the knife, the woman bade her hide it from him. He must not know her rede. And now, how could she keep it from him? She had left, of course, a note for her grandmother and a message for him—“she was sorry that she had had to go away so early”—that alone, however, would not suffice. And Baltimore was not far enough away. Moreover, there was little excuse for her going by the early morning train—he would certainly have taken it if he had known—nor for her staying there, if by remote possibility he prolonged his visit to Mrs Warfield. She must not appear to run away; and her grandmother, out of mere good breeding, was likely to insist the more on his staying on, so brusque would appear her departure. So Miss Ravenel knit her virginal white brows.

Fortunately, the matter was settled by a telegram from her father. It was the family custom to use a cousin's house—Basil Conynghame's—as an address for telegrams, to be forwarded thence, as occasion demanded, by messenger or telephone, there being no operator at Ravenel. Here also Miss

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Ravenel was in the habit of keeping a simple wardrobe, a dinner dress, enough for her necessities should work or weather keep her in the city. (Conynghame himself lived with his Order; but he maintained the house, even after his mother's death left him alone.) The telegram was to the effect that urgent business necessities demanded her immediate presence in New York, where her father would meet her at Mr Gresham's office. There was just time to have the message forwarded to her grandmother and for her to catch the ten o'clock train. Thus it happened that at the very hour when Austin, returned again to the laurel valley, was burying her memory in his heart, Miss Ravenel herself was on her way to his own office in New York.

As she was getting her Pullman seat, she noticed, in the file ahead of her, the unusual beauty of a young lady who seemed, like herself, to be traveling alone; and, coming into the car, she found herself in a chair opposite the stranger. She was quietly dressed, with an expression at once modest and intelligent; she did not seem to notice the men who came into the car, and Miss Ravenel was particularly struck by her having all the morning newspapers. She herself had one (being addicted in her "strong-minded" way, as other women might have phrased it, to the reading of them, for her interest in life), but this un-

feminine habit (she supposed), like the latchkey and the bicycle, was due to her general revolt against what was expected of her who ought (she supposed) by right to have been riding in a governess's cart with other people's children instead of living her own life in a New York flat and traveling thither unattended. At all events, it was unusual to see another young woman reading newspapers; and Miss Ravenel gave her *vis-à-vis* a second glance, noticing this time that she was blond and had a very wonderful complexion of the real "peaches-and-cream" variety, where to perfect fairness is joined so delicate a skin that the carmine flood swells under it like the juices of a nectarine. She seemed, by her figure, to be a woman some years older than herself, although her face might have been of any age of youth, and Miss Ravenel, not wishing to stare, looked herself to see what might be of such interest in the papers. She found nothing, but it was perhaps because she omitted, as was her wont, both the "Society" and the financial pages; still she read on, having, perhaps, a reason for desiring to escape her own thoughts.

She was wrong, however, it appeared, in thinking the other alone, for hardly were they out of the tunnel before a fashionably attired young man appeared and took the chair beside her. Miss Ravenel half-

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fancied she saw a startled look in her eyes as, with an assumption of the greatest familiarity, he addressed her.

“Well, Miss Aylwin, you won out this time. Tamms is all done up. I’ve only got a week to get ashore myself. I wish I had a smart girl like you in my office.” It was impossible not to overhear the strident, overbearing voice, even had not the next words concerned herself. “Where did you leave Pinckney?”

“In Baltimore—” Miss Ravenel looked away. “He had other business in Baltimore.”

“Hm, hm—I guess his business was in New York—look at that—” and the Jew (as Mary Ravenel now saw he was) pressed his forefinger upon the opened newspaper that lay upon the woman’s knee. The fair girl shrank away from him and looked, in evident terror, at Miss Ravenel, so that our heroine, who was about to change her seat, stayed. Shall it be confessed, however, that her curiosity led her to look at the same page of her own newspaper? The first four columns (though it was a Baltimore paper) were given up to a New York dispatch describing the Duval ball, for this important annual function had taken place on the night before.

“I don’t mean that,” the man went on, as if reading her thoughts. The remaining columns bore the

headline: *Panic on Wall Street—reported embarrassment of Phineas W. Tamms.* “Tamms went on last night, and so, I guess, did your young man.” There was a shuddering vulgarity about the voice, and again Miss Ravenel set herself not to hear; but just then it sank to a whisper. Not for one moment did she question their relation—she had read too deeply in the man’s heart for that—but it was an odd coincidence; she could not be his wife, for Mrs Pinckney, she remembered, was rather dark, and, moreover, a Philadelphian, while this girl, Miss Ravenel was persuaded, was country bred and from New England. And what was this sleek Hebrew doing in the trio? Whoever he was, it was clear that he was highly distasteful to the fair young woman. His voice had now sunk to an insinuating whisper, and his hand rested on the back of her chair. “Oh, I spotted you coming down!” Miss Ravenel overheard; then a long, persuasive monotone throughout which the woman betrayed increased distress. Could it be that she does not know how to get rid of him? thought Miss Ravenel. She tried to look away. “Twice the salary,” said the unctuous voice. Suddenly she saw the woman start and give a despairing glance at her while a flood of carmine swept across her face. “Well, at any rate, you’ll come and dine with me,” the man was saying.

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It is said that

“ . . . every gentle maid

Should have a guardian in each gentleman—”

but the poet's words were written for Americans; and Miss Ravenel understood, with a woman's freemasonry, the signals of the other woman's face. She crossed the aisle and sat in the chair by her side just as the man was about to sink into it. “When shall we have our lunch, Miss Aylwin?” she said meaningly. It was fortunate that she had overheard the name. And Miss Ravenel could look—or rather overlook—Mr Markoff in a manner that caused that gentleman, who could bully a woman whom he knew to be a typewriter but would cringe before any who seemed to him a lady, to take himself off in evident embarrassment, stammering that he had thought Miss Aylwin was traveling alone. It afterwards occurred to him that this was not the best thing to have said, but Markoff was not yet quick at social matters. “That girl is a swell, I am sure,” he said to himself; and he wondered how much she had overheard, or, rather, how much she would tell in New York. He cared little what Miss Aylwin might tell to Pinckney or even to Gresham; that was all in the way of business; it was, of course, open to him to acquire information about the enemy's camp even by the method of

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making love to his typewriter; moreover (Markoff felt), he had a hold upon Pinckney; he and Miss Aylwin were stopping at the same hotel; Pinckney's story would only be good until that were told, he reflected. But Markoff was crazily anxious to get into society; and he feared the ridicule of his ineffectual attempt might hurt him with Mrs Levison-Gower. It never occurred to him that maidens did not talk about such things.

Meantime Mary Ravenel was talking almost intimately with the grateful Miss Aylwin. She told her that Mr Pinckney had been visiting at her grandmother's house, and that the mention of his name had emboldened her to intervene. In return, Miss Aylwin explained how she had come to be employed in their office; she talked of her life in New York, of Newport, and Miss Ravenel began to be much interested in her mind. She was from Hadley, Mass., she explained, and "had never been out in society." But she was professionally reticent about their business, or what had brought her and Mr Pinckney on to Baltimore together. Oddly mature in matters of men's affairs, of high finance, even of law, she was curiously immature in everything else. In vain Miss Ravenel tried to find out how she spent her leisure; it was only evident that she had taken up no work, no charity, nothing of the things that interested Miss Ravenel herself.

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But when the latter young lady read from her newspaper the full account of the Allegheny Central meeting of yesterday, and the dialogue between him and Markoff, she became more communicative.

“That was the very man,” she said. “He is horrid. And it doesn’t do for me to know any man—living, as I do, alone in New York.”

“You must come to my classes,” said Miss Ravenel, seeing at once a proselyte and a pupil. “And why not see men? There are plenty of parties, dinners——”

“Oh, if I were in society!” said the other, with a sigh.

She was little interested in Mary Ravenel’s description of her work. The poorer classes, it seemed, did not appeal to her. In return, she explained to Miss Ravenel the effect of their action on the stock market; why the Allegheny Pacific stocks were in a panic and the Centrals strong; then, after their lunch, Mary noticed that she read from end to end the four columns of the Duval ball. “Why, here’s a picture of Mrs Pinckney,” she said. Miss Ravenel looked at it.

“If it’s as bad as the one of Mrs Gower, it’s not much like her.”

“Oh, do you know her? Mrs Gower, I mean? I have tried to get some one to point her out to me

at the opera, but they're never sure. I think I saw her once driving in the park; at least it was Mr Gower; they had bay horses and plum-colored liveries, and he wore a camellia in his buttonhole, and she had such *splendid* roses! Do you suppose that really was the dress she wore at the ball?"

"I don't know. I didn't go," laughed Miss Ravenel.

"*Could* you have gone?" asked the other longingly. "Forgive me, I did not mean to be impertinent——"

And Miss Ravenel began to talk to the older woman like a teacher to a child. Coming to New York, they got an afternoon paper. Markoff only once, hurriedly, passed through the car. He, too, was reading the paper—a pinkish one—and it bore, in letters two inches high, the caption "Corner in Allegheny Central."

"What is a corner, I wonder?"

"Oh, I can tell you all about it!" said Miss Aylwin. The rôles were suddenly reversed. And she told how stocks were bought and sold, "long" or "short," and how sometimes the seller had not the stock he sold and had to buy at any price, and how that made a "corner."

"My little fortune is in Allegheny Central," said Miss Ravenel.

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Miss Aylwin looked at the papers in her lap. She was sorting them, and the documents were "backed," in large letters, "Gresham, Radnor, Daubeny, and Haviland." This, indeed, had at first emboldened Miss Ravenel to speak to her.

"Keep it till the end of the week," she said. "It is no time to sell to-day." And Miss Ravenel looked again with curiosity at the fair face beside her, so wise in matters of money, so innocent in ways of the world. Here was a problem differing—in degree, indeed, if not in kind—from that of her working girls.

Neither of them could afford a carriage; so, getting out at the Desbrosses Street ferry, they walked to Wall Street together.

Mr Markoff drove rapidly away in his cab.

XXXVII

THAT Friday, it was said, Allegheny Central touched the price of \$1,000 per share. Even Mrs Gower, in her Berkshire fastness, turned pale as she read, the next morning, how much she might have realized. "Baby" Malgam—to whose acquaintance Markoff had now attained—sulked for an hour when he next called upon her. Jacob Einstein, whose

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ideal it is to be "worth" \$100,000,000, cannot yet speak of it without tears. But very few of us realize our ideals in this world. Jacob Einstein's \$100,000,000 will doubtless be appreciated to their full value in the next. Meantime August Markoff was getting very busy on earth. Tamms was invisible. And Jim Starbuck, agitator, returned to his old field in the coal lands of the great railway and asked whether, in view of the fact that the stock of the corporation which employed them had been made worth \$1,000 per share—necessarily by their own labor—they deemed their wages of eighty cents for eleven hours quite sufficient.

Very little conscious of these things, but much concerned about her father, Mary Ravenel had sent her name to Mr Gresham's private room. With that deference which he always showed her she was ushered in by the old gentleman himself, and found her father awaiting her. That gentleman rushed up effusively, but was arrested by a wave of Mr Gresham's hand. "This is a business interview, please, Mr Breese, and we will conduct it as such. You and I are Miss Ravenel's trustees, and she, with others, is our *cestui que trustee*."

"Others?" said Mr Breese.

"Others—her issue, or, failing such, yourself. Now you, I understand, after selling her proxy and

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selling your own, have also, quite without authority, sold her 200 shares of Allegheny Central stock."

"Short," said Mr Miles. "But who could have expected this? My friend Tamms——"

"He will shortly be better occupied behind the bars of Dannemora. He has nothing to do with the case."

"But the stock is certain to fall again. I only want to borrow it for a few days. If I cannot, I am ruined." Mr Gresham remained perfectly calm.

"There are others to be considered. And not Miss Ravenel alone. I have little doubt she would be willing enough to let you have it——"

"Oh, yes!" cried the girl, clasping her hands.

"But it is impossible, quite impossible."

"Then," said Mr Breese, "but one thing remains for me to do—I must make an assignment."

"Father, you know that all I can give you is yours." There was a knock upon the outer door; Miss Aylwin entered. "Mr Markoff," said she.

"Let him wait—or stay one moment," said Mr Gresham. "Mr Breese, are you willing to relinquish this trust entirely—wind it up, liquidate it, in fact? Your remainder interest is of little value—the likelihood of your outliving Miss Ravenel is not great—she may marry. The book value of the stock is

\$20,000. If I could get you this sum, would you go? ”

“Go?” said the old man, with a start.

“Go—get out, I mean, to speak plainly! Leave me to deal with your daughter alone. With her consent, I might risk it. Take the \$20,000 and leave us alone. A trip abroad would do you good.”

“But I am pledged to deliver the stock,” said Mr Breese.

This argument did not seem to impress Mr Gresham. “Here, read over this paper, and, if you like it, you and Miss Ravenel must sign it. I’ll let you know if I can manage it, at your address uptown. Miss Aylwin, show Mr Markoff in.” And, as the others went out, Markoff entered with Radnor, the latter in a high state of excitement. Miss Aylwin had disappeared with Mary Ravenel and Mr Breese. Markoff just escaped meeting them again.

“I have been telling Mr Radnor that it is hands down with us,” smiled Markoff insinuatingly. And his air of frankness sat upon him like dew upon the rose.

“And I’ve been telling Mr Markoff that it’s ‘hands up’ with Tamms,” said Radnor.

“Mr Pinckney promised to give us a week,” said Markoff suavely.

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“In which Mr Tamms was to make his assignment,” said Radnor.

Markoff shrugged his shoulders. “On two conditions,” he said, and hesitated. “And one is——”

“And one is?” growled Gresham.

“That I’m to be appointed assignee.”

“There is no one in whose hands I’d rather see Phineas W. Tamms,” assented Mr Gresham gravely. Markoff smiled still more deprecatingly.

“And then——”

“And then?”

“You’re not to press this Miners’ Bank loan before the assignment——”

“Nor, I suppose, sell the collateral——”

“Nor the Chesapeake Trust Company’s——”

“It’s all the same thing——”

“It wasn’t,” laughed Markoff, “before Mr Pinckney got that writing from my client! You know that was devilish clever of him?—Here’s the assignment already signed by my client, and dated next Tuesday. That’s just a week. Of course, you throw in the first day.” And Markoff tossed the paper over.

“About your client,” said Mr Gresham. “All this without prejudice to any prosecution against him for fraud?”

“Oh, perfectly, though I don’t think you’ll find

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anything! He did everything under my advice. And I——”

“You are protected by your privilege from testifying?”

“It isn’t exactly what I was about to say——”

“It will do,” said Radnor explosively. “Anything else?”

“I think we understand each other——”

“I think we do,” said the Welshman, with an oath. “Anything else, Gresham?”

“Radnor, you are altogether too impulsive. Now, I find this conversation most interesting. We’ll say next Tuesday, then, for that little paper? Meantime the Allegheny Pacific—*ah*—securities are to be called in without contest?”

“I didn’t say ‘meantime,’” said Markoff. “At least, I don’t think I did—the agreement signed in Baltimore will show——”

“Mr Markoff’s word is as good as his bonds,” said Radnor in honeyed tones: no Celt could resist the final *s*. Markoff winced.

“Of course the Pacifics are to be canceled, but it must not be known for a week. The fact is”——and again the Hebrew beamed frankness——“I haven’t worked off all my own stock yet. The Centrals, then, you insist on selling out Monday ‘under the rule,’ if Tamms assigns that day?”

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“Well, we thought of taking them over ourselves,” said Mr Gresham.

Markoff held on to his face very hard. “In that event, I must again beg for secrecy. The fact is,” he added, with the air of one who has now confessed the last, “I am a little short of Allegheny Central myself.”

“Dear me,” said Gresham. “Would 200 shares—but I suppose a trifle like 200 shares would be of no use to you.”

“Of the greatest possible use——”

“Twenty thousand dollars?”

“For a week?”

“For two. Miss Aylwin”—he rang the bell—“get Mr Markoff a blank cheque.”

“On what bank, sir?” said the girl, looking down.

“Oh, any bank will do! Mr Markoff will see to that.”

“Clever girl, that,” said the unabashed Markoff. Radnor bounded from his chair.

“You have met her before, I think?”

Markoff, who was signing the cheque, nodded.

“On the train to Baltimore, I think——”

“On the train to Baltimore, I believe.”

“And on the train coming back,” said Radnor, who had had a word with Miss Aylwin in the outer office.

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"No, not coming back; only going. There, Mr Gresham, is the cheque."

Radnor's amazed eyes fixed him with a look he bore unblushingly.

Mr Gresham had to take up the conversation. "There," he said, "that will do. Is that all?"

"I think we understand one another," said Markoff, as he took his hat.

"Oh, perfectly!" was all that Mr Radnor could find strength to say.

"I feel like an accomplice," said Gresham to his partner; "but, after all, Pinckney had to give the promise, and the only person injured will be Tamms."

Radnor expressed his regret that Mr Tamms was again going to escape the State prison. As for Markoff, he thought him too clever for any sublunary punishment.

"Well," said his senior, "everything may turn out for the best. I am inclined to think Tamms will wish he had been there before his astute counsel gets through with him."

It was too late to "certify" Mr Markoff's cheque that night, but Miss Aylwin was dispatched with another, signed by Mr Gresham himself, that gentleman only remarking, as he deposited Markoff's in the safe, that he considered it a "most excellent security."

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She hurried uptown on the Elevated. The address given her was one of those pretentious, promiscuous apartment houses that tower to the west of the park. But it happened that Mr Breese, returning in a carriage with his daughter, had insisted on leaving her, with many touching protestations of gratitude, at her apartment on Lexington Avenue. Miss Ravenel had again urged, in view of this sudden accession of funds, that they should take a larger apartment, and together, but the old gentleman had waved the suggestion aside. "Any little corner is enough for me—a hall bedroom, anything—you know I still have my club, and you need all your little income, my dear. I may take Gresham's suggestion, and go away for a time. You must remember this sum comes out of our principal; moreover, it belongs, morally, to my creditors." And poor Mary felt reproved. How long would it be, after all, before women would gain that clear grasp of financial affairs so natural, apparently, to men? And did that mean that her income was now to be reduced, she wondered? She needed it, even all of it, for certain expenses of her classes; she easily got money for them by letting her wants be known, but she would take no pay for her own services, and she always liked to give a little herself. But she did not like to ask the question lest her father should think she grudged him his capital.

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“What is left is all yours, my dear,” her father went on. “I have had to take mine, but now I must look out for myself. I must no longer take any of the income from you.” Stating a duty was, to Mr Breese’s mind, as good as performing it—and far pleasanter.

So he drove off to the Piccadilly Club, that being the nearest, where he partook of a plurality of cock-tails. Miles Breese had always felt that he could do anything with a woman; but now he had a different job before him—the doing without one. It was well to be on with the new love before he was off with the old. So, before going to West Sixty-fourth Street, he made a call at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

This was the reason that Miss Aylwin, ringing the bell of the flat, was shot up an elevator and ushered into a satin-furnished parlor by a darky boy of many buttons who, taking her name as merely “the clerk from Gresham & Radnor’s,” announced it through a crack of the door to some contiguous room while Miss Aylwin sat down and waited. She had never before been in the apartment of one of the Four Hundred, and would have preferred to see the home of some great lady; however, old Mr Breese was unquestionably on the list, and there were unmistakable signs of some feminine presence. There was a strong scent in the room, not of flowers; on a

tray a Japanese pastil was still burning; and in a network of blue ribbon some hundreds of photographs, mostly actresses or English noblewomen, were carelessly displayed; two small dogs of the breed known as "papillons" sat with the china dogs upon the hearth; the former moved and sniffed, with a bark or two, about her ankles. A startling chromo or two was on the walls, among which, curiously out of place, was the framed and faded photograph of a house that looked, with its gables and its well sweep, its grapevine-covered stone wall and apple orchard, like some old New England farm.

The dogs seemed to be heard, for a woman's voice came through the thin partition: "Please wait, I will be out directly." The voice was certainly not Miss Ravenel's. Miss Aylwin waited, in some uncertainty, a minute more; then she rang the bell, and the buttons appeared. "I have come to see Mr Breese," she said. "I can come back, if he is not in."

But this time the voice answered promptly, through the door, "Do wait, I'll come out now." And as Miss Aylwin, despite the entreaty, rose to go, the door suddenly opened and a large red-haired woman appeared, buttoning hastily her dressing sack; the younger woman remembered then that she had seen her before—at the Ocean House at Newport. She was still handsome, but in the bright

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June daylight looked, despite the whiteness of skin that goes with such red hair, rather coarse and fully fifty.

“Oh,” she gasped, releasing the one button she had almost succeeded in securing, “I thought it was a clerk—who are you?” Quite regardless, now, of her deshabille, the woman crossed her legs upon a sofa and lit a cigarette. Poor Miss Aylwin shrank back, with all a young girl’s modesty. “I had a cheque for Mr Breese,” she stammered. “Are you Mrs Breese?”

“Sure. I’ll take it for him.” But as she spoke the door opened, and a loud voice spoke:

“Miss Aylwin, I hate to contradict a lady, but this one is Mrs Beaumont”—and Mr Breese marched in. “Thank you for the cheque. You will not, I presume, need any receipt? I am only sorry you were troubled with coming here.”

Mrs Beaumont, or, to give her her real name, Jennie Starbuck, looked from one to the other with gathering color.

“So you know one another, do you? And I’m to be cast off, now I no longer have to support you?”

“Jennie,” said the old man, sternly, “the cheque shall be yours—all yours—see, it is \$20,000—but you shall do two things. You shall first apologize for what you have said to her and of me. And then

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you will say, in her presence, that you are not my wife."

Mrs Beaumont took the cheque and looked at it curiously, pulling the gown about her neck. Miss Aylwin gathered herself up on her shaking knees, to go.

"One moment, Miss Aylwin. God knows I apologize, but you must see this through."

"Is the cheque good?" said Mrs Beaumont.

"Miss—this lady will tell you it is certified."

"Oh, you know her name fast enough! Well, I'll take it. I guess it's worth more than you are. I wouldn't 'a' married you, anyhow."

"That will do," said Breese, writing his name on the cheque.

"As for this lady— Well, you always liked 'em young, Miles."

Mr Breese hurried Miss Aylwin through the door, opposite which still stood open the elevator and, one might add, its open-mouthed attendant. "I am afraid she will never apologize."

"Oh, it doesn't matter." Miss Aylwin buried her face in her hands. "Why did they ever send me here?"

"Even Mr Gresham didn't realize what a beast I had become," said Breese. "I can't ask you to forgive me, and, egad! (that chuckle returned to his

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voice which for forty years had made him so popular at clubs ; Mr Miles Breese, for but very few moments at a time, could tune his manner to the note of tragedy) you mustn't forget."

But it was with every possible deference and mark of respect that Mr Breese conducted the poor girl through the hallway, where, calling a carriage, he placed her in it, and in the presence of the porter gave a formal good-by.

The next evening Miss Aylwin, reading her favorite society column of her favorite paper, in the " genteel " boarding house that was her home, came upon the following announcement :

"Colonel Miles Breese, the well-known sportsman, sailed this morning for Europe upon the *Paris*, accompanied by his recent bride, formerly Mrs Cyrus H. Snyder, of Pittsburg."

XXXVIII

TO Mary Ravel, living alone in her poor little rooms on the mean street, the newspaper was the only harbinger of her father's fortune. For Miles Breese's better self usually limited its activities to the recognition of its worsen. He never acted upon such cognitions ; and Emerson has said that

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high emotions not resulting in the corresponding actions are demoralizing to the soul. She could have wished therefore that he had written her a letter. She thought of her mother; whatever it was, she had atoned; she had gone to the end of him. (The end of Miles Breese was not long.) She must reconstruct her life. And her interest was, after all, humanity; she had nothing to do with humanity in the concrete, or, indeed, with men: for them the path of gold, unaware of the hedge roses; her heart was with the women working alone.

(Austin Pinckney, however, was working alone, if ever a man was; and his heart went out to her that very day. O wasted vibrations, dull ether atoms, vain vortices, or whatever by the latest authorities you are, that can transport so crass a thing as heat, and not the will of mind! Yet Mary Ravenel this moment was burying a blush unseen. From now on, Austin knew his heart; she was hiding hers.)

Her heart was with the women working alone. Their work was cheap; was it, after all, better that they should work at all? By love they might reign; and that was cheaper still, they gave it away. Was Ruskin, after all, right, when crying out his higher plea upon the commonplaces of Wages-fund, Demand, Supply, he called that the last touch of wrong

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when women, superfluous, demand a hold on the mattock for themselves as well? And now, some of her friends—gentle, secluded Miss Brevier for instance—thought the ballot, too, might help. What was the result of all their labor? In factories, a wage upon which a man alone could live—so wives must also work—or, like climbing parasites, unworking and unwed, draw sustenance from other lives, in the process destroying them, shutting out, as in a tropic forest, the air of heaven.

(Woman, says our major, is a slave, not to be entrusted with wealth or power. Independent, she is crushed; or, if dowered, becomes a monster. In normal Islam, a man may see four women, but, as the sheik remarked to Lady Duff Gordon, they stay beneath his roof for life. In abnormal Christendom, a man perhaps has seen a hundred, and cares not where they die or where their babes are born. Thus do extremes approach each other, the worldly-wise hark back to savagery.)

But Mary went on thinking. Women's rights? The right to what? The right to be hanged? The right to live their lives down to men's? The right to the primal curse of labor. Where was the cure? In Christianity, in the amendment of living. "Lead the life." Who would believe that it never had been tried? Well, she would try it. She could bid others

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try it. She could make, perhaps— It was Dorothy she now was thinking of.

She must telegraph old Mrs Warfield. She might perhaps not see that morning's papers and she would think, of course, that this had been her own errand in New York. Well, why not? Was not, after all, this the urgent business of her father's telegram?

She had thrown herself out of bed and was hurriedly dressing herself. She might get the morning train. Why not? (Formulated, her thoughts had been: He is doubtless gone from Ravenel. Even if not, self-consciousness was shameful. There had been no betrayal of his secret. She must be emerald. But women have *lettres-de-cachet* for such thoughts.)

As she made her coffee, she threw open the windows and the breath of June came in. Far away, above the housetops, she could see, when it was clear, the blue line of the Sound. (It was very clear to-day.)

Coming down, she found a letter from Mr Pinckney. It had been forwarded by her grandmother from Ravenel and was dated at Wheeling. A "bread-and-butter" letter—the English call it a Collins, after the respectable gentleman so named in one of Jane Austen's novels. There was no reason for her hesitation in opening it. A bread-and-butter—some say board-and-lodging—letter. Austin himself had

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so entitled it when writing it, and made it a model of its kind.

“Dear Miss Ravenel,” it ran (he was not daring the possessive), “I must write to thank you for your hospitality, though I have also written to Mrs Warfield. I am only sorry that my early morning walk should have caused me to be absent when you were suddenly called to the city. I was but one train behind you; but at Baltimore I found letters which have led me out here. Some clients have got a coal-mining property, on which the men are refusing to work. I am so glad to have seen Ravenel. Believe me, yours very sincerely—” Could he be offended?

Ah, she knew too well that he was not offended. She tore up the note and went into the street. Her unseasonable return found her without occupation. She could hardly call together her classes for a day or two. Yet for some reason she did not feel like going back at once to Ravenel. The long summer was before her, and on the old estate there was, after all, she now felt, little to do. She never before had wished she were a man; but now she half formulated this commonplace to herself. After all, their lives were always full of action. True, she herself had filled her working year with service—service of others—which, after all, is the best the best of us can do, when not mere adventurers, self-seeking. A woman-

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adventurer was detestable. She had known such; not in the vulgar sense; Miss Ravenel included in her definition young ladies consciously intending marriage. Common life is labor, the higher life is service; such a life is always full. It is the idler, the pleasure seeker, who finds life empty. All the same, a woman's life is liable to long vacations. The interest is not continuous. What was she to do with herself just now? She could not bring herself to call upon the Havilands. Her father's wedding was too recent. That, perhaps, had been but a poor idol; yet she had cherished it. Somehow, now, it was gone. The faith his life had failed to shake his marriage had overthrown. She blushed a little as she remembered another instance in her life, a little woolly lamb that she had had when four years old. She had always carried it, for years and years, under her left arm. The legs had dropped off, one by one, and the wool had come out, until finally nothing was left but a little fold of sheepskin. Still she loved it more than ever. But one summer she was taken on a journey, and the lamb was left behind; and it was some years after before she found it again, in a drawer, a rag of skin and wool, and she had blushed scarlet to remember how she had loved it once.

Then she tried hard not to be too fond of Ravenel. It must pass out of her life in a year or

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two, she knew. Her grandmother was very fond of her, but, coming down at noon and ordering the farm, managed distinctly well to get on without her. Old lady Warfield was no *bourgeoise*!—Mary smiled to herself, rather sadly—she loved her *en aristocrate*; she had really preferred hearing of her at grand balls to having her all the time at Ravenel. Also, she liked quite undivided authority there. But the beautiful girl, her granddaughter, was to take her own place in the great world, and, of course, to marry well. She had never said a word of this, but Miss Ravenel knew well enough it was in her mind, and felt conscience stricken she was doing so little not to disappoint her.

There was, to be sure, Freddy Wiston. His roses had lain in the hall with Pinckney's letter. Poor little Freddy (he weighed over two hundred, rosy and chubby, and was not even short, but somehow one always called him "little" Fred Wiston)—he had his delicate perceptions, despite his millions and his materialism, and he had known that she would like something friendly to-day. He could not come to see her, of course, in her flat, so he made up for it by frequent flowers. It made him too desperately unhappy when she would not take them; and to beg him not to send them was but to invite another proposal. He had seen her twice or thrice, in the grand

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balls of her first season. What he saw in her she could not imagine—he was a shrewd man of business, owner of mountains of iron and copper, devoted to the making of millions, and had proposed to her thirty-seven times in the ensuing four years. Yet she felt that she never *could* say yes.

(She came near it once, though. It was some years later when she herself was being discussed, on her first return from Europe, by some vulgar Duval people. One didn't think she had ever been a beauty, and the other deplored her inability to marry. Both doubted her ever having had eligible offers. They were two great ladies; and Wiston was a shy and still a young man— But at this—Miss Ravenel had heard—he interposed. “All I have to say,” the little gentleman had said, “is that she could have married me any time these ten years.”)

Well, she did not, usually, even write to acknowledge his roses now. He had begged her not to; and it was well understood that they—the roses—went promptly to some one of her sick pupils. But to-day she wrote, and made the poor fellow happy for a day. But she told him that she was going to leave her apartment, so that he must send no more.

She wrote another note—a note to Miss Aylwin, asking her to come and see her that evening. She

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was strangely interested in this handsome girl, who seemed, in some way, so much finer than her mind. They spent the evening together. Miss Ravenel asked her to go to the philharmonic concert. But the music did not much appeal to her: she seemed more interested in the people. Also, she had been disappointed that they did not "dress." In fine, the result was rather disappointing; she tried again to interest her in her own work, but Miss Aylwin seemed rather fastidious about meeting working girls. She didn't even seem to understand why Miss Ravenel liked to. "You know," she said, "you can't make them any different."

"Come and try," said Miss Ravenel.

But the pretty stenographer shook her head. "It's all very well for you," she said; "you're a lady, a society lady. You can do things; besides, they all look up to you. But they'd treat me like one of themselves. I've served an apprenticeship—in a telephone school—it's the same thing. And the telephone girls are worse. You have to sit alongside of a girl, perhaps, who all her nights and Sundays leads a gay life." Miss Aylwin spoke simply, as a man who recognizes such things, but Miss Ravenel repressed an oh! "I mean that they see men evenings, and not always the same men. They used to show me their photographs and things. Common girls are just

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common girls, and they don't want to be anything else."

"Oh, oh!" said poor Miss Ravenel, this time unable to be silent. "But couldn't you have complained to the company?"

"And lose my situation? The company can't afford to consider the girls' private lives. Some of the very worst are the best operators. When they work on a man's job, they must be judged like men are. No one cares what a man does out of office hours, even the girls don't."

"Oh, Miss Aylwin——"

"Well, I mean common girls. Most of us can't be ladies. And there's no pretending to be; it only makes them discontented." Miss Aylwin closed with a sigh.

"But you are a lady," said Miss Ravenel.

Miss Aylwin blushed with pleasure.

XXXIX

INJUNCTION modified. Settlement of the Parkfield coal strike. At a hearing to-day before Judge Edsall who granted the injunction last week against the striking miners at Parkfield, that part of his decree which enjoined the miners from leaving

their employment pending the present contract or from assembling together or marching with flags upon highways was amended by agreement of counsel, Hugh Michael representing the miners and Charles A. Pinckney, of New York, the operating company. A prompt settlement of the strike is now confidently anticipated." To Miss Ravenel, opening her *Sun* upon the train as she returned the next day, this dispatch appeared most prominent; and turning to the inside pages she found an editorial article upon the "novel doctrine thus promulgated."

How quickly the "world of men" for him! She envied, one moment, a man's potentiality of action; subconsciously, the dispatch relieved her. She had been resolutely holding certain thoughts at arm's length. Yet she suspected—for this our heroine was a woman—why he had not come back to New York, why he had preferred the ruder fight in the mountains. After all, it might yet be well, and she had but gained a friend. The superfluous she had suddenly seen in his face that day would naturally subside, transmute itself to quieter thoughts. Meantime it was a great thing to fight. And for herself—that summer—the world of dreams.

But Mary Ravenel did not dream that, from that time on, he fought but as Palomides—"crying her name." Yet may never words express what passes

in the pure heart of a young girl; it is a mystery for herself—let it then remain a mystery to us who are outside.

Her grandmother made no comment on their recent guest; and after all she found work ready to hand. Köllner, the flaxen-curled young foreman of the watch factory, came to her in some trouble. The “trust”—for so he practically called that mysterious entity whose very existence was always strenuously denied—had again intimated that the watch cases, which it was their custom to buy ready made, might in future be nonprocurable by independent manufacturers. Now, to have made their own cases would have almost absorbed the profit they could now make on the delicate hand-made works. He had enough cases on hand, Köllner told her, to finish the season; but if he could get no more? He went to her because it was his habit, like everyone else’s in the neighborhood, to go to her; afterwards, perhaps, if she so advised, they went to a lawyer.

Mary promised to see what she could do; and then they had a little talk about other matters. She had arranged, later, to visit the Havilands, but the rest of the summer she meant to devote to an experiment to which her grandmother had been induced, only with the greatest difficulty, to consent. This was, not only to invite a more or less permanent

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house party from among the younger working women she knew in New York, but to invite one or two guests of a different class, possibly even gentlemen, to meet them. In her own mind the expense had been the sole objection, but she found that this did not even occur to her grandmother—what indeed has a *marquise* to do with dollars and cents?—and after all farm supplies were the one thing that cost them nothing. And the extra household work would be done by the girls themselves. No; it was the social objection that figured largely in Mrs Warfield's mind. "And suppose," she added in climax, "your gentlemen should fall in love with your young women? Or it might be the other way about—in that class you never can tell."

"Well, I only meant the Havilands—they have promised to come down for a week in September, just before the vacation ends, and I go back with them—and young Köllner, the foreman—it might be the best thing for him, for I'm sure he'll make trouble if he marries any girl in the factory—and perhaps Mr Wiston. He won't fall in love with anybody," Miss Ravenel ended, a little sadly.

"How do you know?" said the old lady, speaking and looking a little sharply. "In my days we did not play with a man." But the girl only looked serious and kept her own counsel. For poor Freddy



“‘In my days we did not play with a man.’”

was past playing with or praying for—only humbly beatitudinous when in her presence—she had thoroughly tried absence, and now was treating him homeopathically. And why not, after all, lift the poor fellow to the seventh heaven when it did no harm? If he saw much of her, naturally and simply, she might dispel some of the ridiculous glamour with which he surrounded her. (But why did it never, in later times, occur to her to treat Austin Pinckney in this fashion?) And as for the girls, why, none of them would fall in love with Freddy Wiston. When she had playfully warned him not to do so himself, the vivacious millionaire had had one of the few moments in which history could record his eloquent silence, but he had looked at her, with a dog's eye, which made her sorry; moreover, she felt grateful to him for controlling, in so apposite a juncture, his thirty-eighth proposal.

But Freddy, who had entered with enthusiasm into the scheme, regarded himself upon honor not to propose while being, or going to be, her guest, and proffered himself, moreover, as willing to meet, or even escort down, Miss Aylwin, whose portrait Miss Ravenel, in most glowing colors, had painted, to an ear (or should it be eye?) most dulled and inattentive. This much had been arranged before she left New York; only that Miss Aylwin, strangely

shy, with difficulty prevailed upon to come, had persistently refused any escort.

So now—for Freddy could hardly be the only gentleman—she was asking Köllner, and explaining to him, tactfully as she always could, why he was to come and who the ladies were that he might meet, and otherwise gracefully handling his social diffidence; he was not, of course, to stay in the house, being a neighbor, but to come to dinner and join in their walks. And the scarlet flush that colored the blond skin to the very root of his yellow hair indicated how gratefully he welcomed the invitation.—What was there in the young woman's personality that made so many a man flush with pleasure if she merely spoke to him? She was not considered a beauty in the great world—poor Austin, in the years to come, would notice, with a curious mixture of joy and anger, how little such men—"men of the world"—noticed her.—Then, for second, she had secured a famous young clergyman; fascinated with the scheme, he had begged to spend part of his vacation as one of her guests. His dream was to mingle, to bring to a mutual comprehension, different social classes. He made, laughingly, but one condition: he wished to learn how young women of that grade of society first met their followers, and begged, therefore, that his condition as a married man be withheld from them!—and Miss

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Ravenel, also laughingly, though calling it most immoral, had assented. She told her grandmother, explaining, too, that they might be told, or find it out naturally, after a few days or at the proper time; but that lady seemed to think that in such a general mix up of impossible relations a *travesti* more or less did not matter. Also she remembered, with a twinkle of her bright young eyes, that too many cooks would spoil the broth, and that, to her taste, the more red pepper the better.

But Miss Ravenel did not know what to do about the watch business. She would write to Pinckney, as a lawyer, she said to herself; but somehow she didn't. She ended by writing to John Haviland. She gave him a long exposition of the situation; its history, and the conditions which had led to it. "They," she said (she was necessarily vague in her pronouns), "they have offered for the stock of the little company a price which hardly more than represents the present value of the plant without good will"—where does she get her grasp of business, thought John—"and, moreover, would reduce their wives to idleness. Most of them cannot do machinery work if they would, and the girls must not leave Laurel Run. They live at home, and work in pleasant places; in short, the whole 'outfit' (as Freddy Wiston would say) is just such as we all hope will be typical in the future. Yet

if they can't buy watch cases they must go out of business. I suppose there is no law compelling the Trust to sell to them. Nor, I suppose, to make the same price to them that they do to others. Most of the retailers already refuse to sell our watches, so they can hurt us no more there; our clientele, for our limited output, is assured without new markets. They have had the railroad raise its freight rates; but the goods are so concentrated in value and the city of Baltimore so near that we can cart them if necessary; Philadelphia, too, is not far off; while the best sale of all is to old Southern families coming to Washington who buy them at our office there as their fathers did before them. But we must have the cases. I have only thought that Messrs Stair & Lorimer, who make only cheaper watches and sell the Laurel Run side by side with them, might be interested enough in us to consent to buy our cases in their name. It is a case of industrial warfare in which all is fair."

To which John Haviland replied, inclosing a letter from the Miners' Bank to Messrs Stair & Lorimer "which might be of some help," and only saying that "upon consideration of her conclusion, as expressed in her last sentence, he really did not see why she needed any further advice upon the subject."

So Austin was spared his letter. But reading,

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a few weeks later, in the *Times* (how do such things get into the paper?) that “Miss Ravenel was entertaining, at Ravenel in Maryland, a house party consisting of the Rev. Bernard Rhodes, David Radnor, Frederic Wiston, and Miss Aylwin of New York”—his heart closed in upon itself.

How could he know that Freddy was still only at his thirty-seventh proposal? Or that Miss Aylwin—quiet Miss Aylwin—had herself sent the item to the *Times*?

He was very near to tears again, that night, as he said his prayers for her happiness.

XL

THE heart knoweth its own bitterness. As Austin had lain there, that old day at Ravenel, his face close to the little gray and red mosses, arguing it away with his intellect, this was all he knew: all except that “the wood spurge has little stems of three.” He never forgot the shape and habit of that crisp, warm moss; old it was, older than his sorrow; it would be there still when his love was gone. No: nothing as this was eternal; no change in the mere physical world so great. The wood sorrel might leaf, flower, wither, leaf again;

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the old gray moss might take its centuries to grow upon the living stone, and these would be but moments to his living soul. "In the beginning was the Word—" This was his soul's word—and he had not waited for it.

He had been startled at his own first flood of tears; he had looked at the wet moss as a stag, sunken to his knees, might look upon the reddening grass; now his face was dry, and he knew that never so would it be wet again. Even in his mind he soon gave up the effort at denial, the effort at hope, the effort of clear vision of any future. The world had been so willed for him, that was all. Not heaven itself on earth could work his cure. The heart knoweth its own bitterness.

Then his clinched hands crisped until they tore his nails upon the time-worn rock. The coming thought sent its messenger of horror; the heart closed cold upon itself before the head had spelled the word. O God, if he had waited! Had a door but opened the other way, had a door before him but been closed. He might have met her any day, at the Havilands', at Mr Gresham's office. What angel from hell had guided his steps, those days, that he and she were kept apart! It might, so easily, have been—why had he not waited! He had not truly known that love could be. Yet, for all eter-

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nity, her soul had been; "well enough" he knew it; well enough, and now his own was no other thing than hers. And too late, too late by all the laws of conscience and this world.

This, then, was love. And he had not believed. That was the unpardonable sin, he had not believed. He had taken the song and story of the world—he had taken both the passion of Tristan and the life love of the grim Florentine—he had taken the histories of the actions of all noble men—for song and story. He had credited the libertines. Impliedly, he, who was different, had followed the average multitude, the horrible Puritan view that sees nothing in love but the sin, naught in the woman but sex—*das erste beste*.

Austin never deceived himself. After its one first effort at pretense, his mind saw the futility of it. This was love, and it was the end. There should be no shirking. And he repeated the phrase aloud, many, many times—Mary Ravenel, Mary Ravenel, Mary Ravenel—and then again, with a hush, *I love you*; the Word eternal, which he who uttering profanes if he come not to the altar with clean heart. And uttering this word about her, had it been even to her, Austin could feel no sense of sin. Yet he did not blind himself. He loved her as a saint may set his face toward a distant shrine that he shall

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never see; as a priest may kneel before his secret *ikon*; and yet he knew he also loved her as a man a woman. And he could not feel that there was sin in it.

And then, for very shame, he buried his burning face once more in the new dry moss. The sin had been before. What now was he to poor Dorothy, or she, alas! to him? Dorothy had not destroyed his happiness—she had only shown him it had never been. And here he held his thoughts by the throat.

One wonders if the Puritans, if the common citizens are right—or are they conscious hypocrites? Dorothy and Austin might have parted—the day after their marriage—and in a few days forgotten each other. It was in the succeeding week that had come their real courtship, but even then the relation might have ended, like Rosaline's to Romeo. In a year, Dorothy was no different girl than she had been the day she wrote her fatal letter. What irreparable—except to the Mohammedan, the libertine—what irreparable had happened? Their marriage had been, alas! but a thing of the senses—the Puritans say all marriages are so, and do their best to make it so; and are “shocked” when a Tolstoi points out their own hypocrisy. This, they say, is the one determining thing, as they set forth the wedding feast: the girl has been educated by suggestive si-

lences, the boy told by prurient suggestion, the incident, as it were, been dramatized by the British Matron so ordering life—and they are told that this is all. But it is the birth of a child that makes of a girl a woman, the birth of love that makes of a boy a man; nor is it a sin to love—who loves truly. It is the Puritan who would make naught of love. It is our conventioners who say: There is no such love: it is the formula only that counts; after that all is the same.

A philosopher may carry his thoughts a little farther than a gentleman. Austin Pinckney only thought—that somehow his life had ended before it had begun. Then he got as far as the remorse—the terrible, unrepentant remorse—that he had shown his love to her. What dreams he might have had of far-off worship, or even of companionship, perhaps, in work or sorrow if not in joy, had come to wreck. And then of the “might have been”—but that way madness lay—and then of the shame of his past, as if it had been some low amour—if sin it was, the marriage did not sanctify it. But it was not, then, sin; no man could think it sin; and yet by it his life was ended; things were wrong. He had but been born to-day, and he was born in chains.

Had she, after all, seen his love? She was angry, she had turned her face away. His path lay dark

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before him. Now only one thing was clear—he must never see her. He must never see her, and she had gone away displeased. She could not understand; he could never tell her. Nothing remained. Any man will have a thought of suicide at such a time; but to a man like him it comes as a triviality to be dismissed with a scoff. Wherein would it profit him to lose his life? He was enlisted in the whole of things—he was no “quitter.” If there was anything in him immortal, that thing would not be altered by his death. Moreover, Miss Ravenel was still among the souls which dwell on earth. *I am you, I am you*, he kept saying. But she had turned her face from him. There was no hope. God himself could alter these things not. God himself could now not bring him happiness. God himself could not make her do ill, nor could he even pray that she might think of him again.

He could only, as Palomyd:

“Never glad with sweetness of his lady’s eyes—
Unloved ever, still must love the same,
And riding ever through a lonely world
Against the danger desperately hurled,
Crying her name.”

He arose and went down to the house. And there, as if for his blasphemy, there came some surcease of

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the bitterness that filled the poor man's heart; the beginning of the happiness of faith. The gentle, deep-eyed old lady had another message for him; it was the telegram Miss Ravenel had sent from Baltimore about her father's need, and with it a word for Austin. "Tell him," she had written, "I did not know that I should not see him to say good-by when I took the early train."

To say good-by! What did it mean? At all events—oh, thank God! she had meant to see him again. She had been willing to see him again. Had the gentle girl seen the effect of her word, she had taken it away from him, perhaps; she had only meant to prevent his accentuating the cause of her departure; but his heart sang *Nunc dimittis*. Now he could go in peace. Mr Warfield pressed him to stay, but no, he, too, had business in West Virginia. "Perhaps he would come again, on his return?" His heart leaped at the words! But no; he might not come again. Some time, then, said the kindly old lady. Yes, some time.

He went once more up the leafy valley, the brook in its ferny solitude below. Here was the place he had first looked at her, the dropping water still glistening on the rock. He drank the picture to his heart, for he should never see it again, and the sweet dell itself was but the frame of a picture carried

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henceforth in his memory—a dark-haired, slender girl, in a simple gown—with a mist in her eyes. Her face seemed blurred in the mist of his own; her face, alone, was never more clear; this, though, was to be the blazon of his shield through life.

Then he went in peace. And with the motion of the train, the hurry of action, the telegraphing and answering of telegrams, the decision not to return upon her footsteps as it were, the seeing where lay his work, in West Virginia; finally, in the cool of the evening, the quiet train, thundering its mighty way along the Alleghenies—the rest of motion and the turmoil of his loneliness—his peace gave way to joy. His soul repelled remorse or doubt, refused to plan, refused to think, denied to heaven the wrong.

He saw the joy of all the days behind him—the unconscious joy of the many weeks preceding—and as the lonely stars sing in their spheres, each traveling alone on its appointed way, he sang within his lonely heart and worshiped God.

XLI

I DEMAND the cancellation of this injunction," thundered Pinckney. The weak judge cowered upon his bench; he had been placed there by the rail-

road senator, and wanted to "hold his job"; he knew no law, but well he knew his job. The quaint old-fashioned Virginia-Doric court room was crowded with anxious miners; the plaster cast of female Justice, holding the scales, had bared her breast, but lost one blinded eye; the local counsel for the railroad and the miners, dressed all alike in rusty frock coats and black string ties, spat at the spittoons impatiently; the terrorized Hungarian witness, only partly reassured, kept his eyes fixed upon the dirty Bible he had kissed; outside the rail a pack of flannel-shirted miners looked over at their unexpected deliverer with wide-open eyes. For Austin Pinckney had "blood in his neck"; he knew the time to bluster, the place to knock down and drag out. So he pointed his white forefinger at the judge and dropped the slow words one by one, hissing like a blacksmith's iron in its trough of water:

"Your honor should know, and if it does not I will inform it (this was the tone that Pinckney dared to take), that the writ of injunction was the highest writ in the king's prerogative." His honor looked at the great New York lawyer, puzzled; he knew that he represented the famous Gresham firm; he knew that he came from Wall Street; and here he was pleading against "the business interests of the country." Surely, it was those "business interests"

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that had made him what he was; made him as they had made the judge himself; his honor could not understand it.

“ And though in its ignorance your Legislature has chosen to mix up law and equity, and every petty magistrate now wields this mighty power (his honor blinked rapidly, having visions of committing Pinckney for contempt, but this he did not dare), a Federal judge is still the successor of the king’s chancellor—keeper of the conscience of his sovereign—and your sovereign is the American people. The conscience of America will not enslave. And your honors wield this mighty sovereign power to prevent irreparable wrong, not to hamper freemen’s rights. Do you not know how the common law tells us that the contract of labor alone of all contracts may not be compelled of enforcement, because any compulsion to labor is slavery? That when you forbid these defendants to walk upon the earth, to consult, to meet together, you are playing the Stuart’s game—and when you enjoin other men who have never heard of you, you or your petty court, from doing anything that you may choose to call interference, and commit them to jail without a trial, you are using his Star-Chamber tools? Will you enjoin the whole country to keep even the Ten Commandments? to do your will? and then condemn any citizen of it who in your

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judgment has not done so—without a trial, or notice, or defense—to punishment and loss of liberty?

“What are we here for? What Federal question is here involved? These miners are West Virginia citizens; are not her laws sufficient to keep them in order? If not, are we a police court? No; it is because the profits of that sacred being, a New Jersey corporation, are here in jeopardy, that you have moved.” He turned to the company counsel. “You have had a dispute with your help—I care not which is right—but to get your way you invoke the fiction of the corporation and pretend it dwells in Hoboken, when all its real life is here, that you may drag into your sordid local quarrel the mighty power of the United States and end the case in bloodshed and cold steel!”

Austin's success—or apparent success—in their old mill case had caused Gresham to write to him at length about this coal-mining affair; and he, anxious to get somewhere, anywhere, anxious to be fighting something, had promptly telegraphed that he would go to the scene at once and only asked full powers. And arriving there in the early morning he had gone, not to the office of their local attorney, not to the superintendent of the mine, but to the lodge rooms of the local Federation of Labor. It was early morning and the men were all sober; he found them,

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indeed, plotting the demonstration for the day. Frankly, he stated who he was; but then he presented his letters of introduction—his “character” as it were—letters from labor unions in Nauchester, in Boston, in New York—certifying that he was “fair.” And he told them he had come to them first, wishing to hear their side; that he was not come as a lawyer; that, indeed, he would take no steps in court without their knowledge. This was a thing to be settled first as between man and man, not with soldiers or with Pinkerton men.

It took him all that day to gain their confidence, even to the extent that they would promise to meet him, with the real leaders, in the evening. For, as the day wore on, he heard a good deal of “old man Zappi.” He soon suspected that the officers of the local union were not, after all, “the real thing.” Zappi, it appeared, was a sort of independent prospector; he had lived there many years amid the mountains, making experiments with their iron ore; it is leadership of men, not official rank, that counts in a partisan war; what Zappi said, he was told, “went.”

Zappi turned out to be a vast black-bearded Italian, six feet and a half high, who had spent the best years of his youth in an Austrian prison. With him he visited the miners’ homes—rude unpainted

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pinewood tenements, where four families herded together with a common sink, paying eight dollars a month rent each to the company—contrary to the statutes of West Virginia. With him he visited the “company” store, where the necessities of life and some of the poisons were sold to the miners and their families, at high prices and on monthly credits—also against the law. Indeed, the miners were paid, not in cash, but in coupons, redeemable indeed at the company store, but only for the balance after the bearer’s account was liquidated; and there was rarely any balance. Very few of the miners ever saw the color of the company’s money; on the contrary they were heavily in debt to it, and all under the impression, carefully fostered by the agent, that they could not leave there if they would until the debt was paid. With Zappi he finally went to some of the shafts of the mine itself. Here the work was suspended; only the pumps, which had so far been respected by the strikers, were moving to keep the mine free of water. A few score men—pickets, Austin fancied—were lazily smoking around the approaches to each shaft; a score or two of poorly clad women and girls were reviling a dozen or so well-dressed men, armed with Winchesters and revolvers, on guard behind the fence.

“Do the women work in the mine?” asked Austin. “Surely that is against the law?”

"It is," said Zappi. "So they only bring the men their dinners. Perhaps sometimes they bear a hand in pulling out a car or picking—that is an affair between them and husbands or fathers. Or else they may be clerks in the shed. Don't they look it?" said the big man with a laugh.

"No girls can be employed at all under fourteen in any mine in West Virginia," said Austin.

"But a woman attains majority upon her marriage. Our Italian girls are marriageable very young."

"The men inside, I suppose, are Federal marshals or deputies?"

Zappi nodded. "The company swore in all they could—at three dollars a day. It is better pay than they can get loafing around the barrooms at Charleston. Better pay and more fun. They killed a striker only last night. They were in his house. He had a pretty wife, and he had quarreled with her. They did not go away after he was killed," said Zappi grimly.

"But surely, if the man is known——"

"He has only to step across the main street to be in Kentucky. The national Government has power over the strikers, it seems, but it has no power over those who kill the strikers."

"Surely, if he were a Federal marshal—no, I see,"

mused Austin. "A murder *by* a marshal would involve no Federal question."

"I do not profess to understand your Constitution—we used to think we wanted one in Lombardy. However, the man had a brother or two," added Zappi placidly. "He will be stabbed in a day or two, that marshal. And then they will send up Pinkerton men. Well, they are better behaved—the Pinkerton men."

It was very different from the strike in Nauchester. 'These people were really starving. Zappi spoke an English that was both cultivated and idiomatic. "You cannot expect the starving men to be too lady-like," said he. "Particularly, the women."

Pinckney determined that the strike should end. This time, the cause was an avowed one. There was no "screen law" in West Virginia—the one that had passed had been declared unconstitutional by her Supreme Court—so the company would weigh each miner's output on its own scales, and only after it had been "screened" and the rock or refuse and dust rejected. As a consequence, though each man was permitted only to mine the seam as it came, he would often find that a full day's work had brought but half day's pay. But, under the injunction, the miners had no power of concerted resistance; other men, Hungarians, were being rapidly imported; the older Italians, who had known but that one home in

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America, were to be turned out and rendered homeless; and they were forbidden to warn them, or even to persuade. The head men, moreover—superintendents, foremen—who had ignored a monthly contract, were in danger, under the wording of the injunction, of arrest for breaking it.

Persuaded at last of his good faith, Zappi and the two officials agreed to go with Austin to Wheeling where lived the Federal judge. Still suspicious of his entertainment, it required Zappi's intelligent assistance to prevail on them to dine with Austin at the leading hotel, where, to Austin's amusement, these sons of Anak made, from the pretentious catalogue of the hotel bill of fare, a dinner consisting of a plate of soup and three plates of diversified ice cream. They did not dare accept his hospitality overnight, and separated after midnight with a promise to meet him in the court room that morning.

It was easy to persuade the local attorney that he had gone too far; it was less easy to persuade their superintendent that the picture cards were not all in his own hand. Whereupon Austin told him openly that he was there to settle that strike; and that if, to do that, it was necessary to appear for the miners, he would appear for the miners and move to vacate the injunction in the morning. Meantime Zappi, he told him (Zappi, from his birth near Fiume, knew

Hungarian), had gone back to the mining camp to organize a procession, with a few transparencies—written in Hungarian—in case the injunction should be modified. So the judge had been compelled to open his court—a court of equity, the reader knows, is never closed—and many miners, getting wind of it, had come to town.

Austin had paused, after the words we have quoted, and the judge fidgeted upon his bench impatiently. “What then do you want?”

“I want,” said Austin, “that part of your injunction which forbids American citizens from walking on the highways, which denies freemen the right to leave their labor when they choose, vacated. And, since we are enjoining against criminal offenses, I want this New Jersey plaintiff enjoined from breaking the laws of West Virginia, in that it compels the defendants to trade at the company store and works young girls and women about the mines.”

Pinckney saw the counsel for the mine and railroad put their heads together.

“I want the railway required to give Ferdinando Zappi and other independent miners the same rates it gives the plaintiff.”

The railroad counsel spoke hastily to the judge; and his honor interrupted. “I think Mr Pinck-

ney, this matter can be best settled by agreement of counsel in the lobby. Mr Clerk, adjourn the court."

"And I promise," said Austin, uplifting his hand, "that if this is done, all disorder shall cease, the miners will return to work pending the arbitration of the mine counsel, Mr Ferdinando Zappi, and myself. Am I right, men?" He turned to the audience of miners and repeated it in Italian. There was a roar of assent.

Coming to the judge's private room, the whole atmosphere was changed. The judge himself produced cigars, and the railroad counsel, from a capacious green bag, a bottle of whisky. "Wouldn't do to find such a thing in the judge's chambers—but this comes in the original package, eh, judge?"

"Well, really," said his honor, looking away, "you got me up rather early in the morning, boys. But, brother Pinckney—that move about the rates—in the first place, the railroad isn't a party; in the second place, your firm is counsel for it."

"Well," said Austin, "Zappi helped me; one good turn deserves another. I knew it was all among friends," he added.

Southerners have not a keen sense of humor. "The railroad doesn't make rates any different to anybody. It owns the stock of the Powhatan coal

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mine, or so I am informed. But it buys its coal at the mine."

"The mine doesn't pay any dividends," said its counsel significantly. "But how did you get them to agree to the arbitration, Mr Pinckney?"

"Zappi and I have got it all arranged. You are to pay a minimum rate per carload of mineral. And then you are to pay an extra arbitrary for the merchantable coal."

"Well, I don't know that we can do any better, particularly if his honor is going to emasculate our injunction."

"Oh, brother Pinckney must fix up his injunction. I'll sign it," said the judge.

"The deputy marshals must be discharged. I have promised that."

"We shall be more than ready to stop the expense. But how about the protection to property?"

"I'll answer for that," said Austin. "I'm more troubled about the Hungarians—that witness was frightened to death."

"Oh, the Huns and dagoes must fight it out," said the court. "Anyhow, I've got no jurisdiction."

But Pinckney went back and passed that night at the mine, in the house of his friend Zappi. There was no disorder; only a procession with fireworks and a little noise. The deputies were hustled out upon

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a special train. And it was some years before another strike took place in the Powhatan coal fields.

Austin was so tired that he could not sleep upon the sleeping car going home. He pulled up the shades of his section and watched the great mountains that seemed, with the train's motion, to go slowly by. He felt that he had been right in what he had done. He only wished that he could talk it over with Mary Ravenel. But alas! he might never more talk any question over with Miss Ravenel. He had forfeited the right. Ah, God, if he had known that one could love like this!

XLII

THE house at Ravenel had been somewhat more full than Miss Aylwin had reported it. Besides Bernard Rhodes and Freddy Wiston, and the Havilands later, and she herself and Miss Brevier, there had been two or three other New York women, to say nothing of Fritz Köllner and a series of young girls from the watch factory, who did not always sleep at the house. But Miss Aylwin was quite without interest in these.

At first, Miss Ravenel tried asking the factory girls in twos. But this, she found, did not answer;

they would cling to each other like kittens in a basket. They were not so much afraid of the women (for they had known Miss Ravenel), but very much afraid of the men, and insisted upon not forgetting that Köllner was their overseer. It is true, they were only partly Americans; all had some Swiss or German in their descent. On the other hand, the New York girls were quite easy with Rhodes and Freddy Wiston, but very much afraid of Mrs Warfield and Miss Brevier, even a little admiringly awful of their hostess. For Miss Ravenel had not, purposely, invited any from the dozen of her tried lieutenants, young women she had worked with for years, whose characters were formed, whose standards were high—they quite understood this, and were not jealous. “We have you in the winter,” said one of them when she explained it to them—but she had chosen guests among the young women who attracted her attention in stores, in dressmakers’ shops, in salaried positions. They were not, as a rule, in her classes, nor yet interested in settlement work; indeed, Miss Ravenel had to use some ingenuity to get the invitations naturally to them. Far from being the “most deserving,” or even “the poor,” they were girls, rather, who belonged to the discontented beauty type, whose career might yet be said to present a doubtful horoscope; they were all earning good wages and all

young. For the young hostess frankly recognized that there was nothing, or nothing of this sort, to be done with the woman who had turned thirty, or even twenty-five. And the one hopeless class, she had discovered, either to work upon or to work for others, was, sad to say, the idle middle-class young woman who lived at home and had pocket money; while to the poor, of course, it was useless to present this side of life.

For Mary Ravenel's—possibly Quixotic—object was to mingle different social classes: not so much that they might copy, as that they might comprehend, each other. She did not see, in a democracy, why there should not be a common meeting ground. Even in the Florentine republic, even in Provençal life—those two wonderful civilizations of the so-called darker ages, the one material, the other spiritual, from either of which, however, all that we have of art and beauty, of culture and manners, takes its modern birth—even Florence and Provence were socially democratic; classes understood one another; knights and burghers, artists and artisans, lived and worked together, with common aims and common lofty culture. The lord, the knight, protected, patronized; while the goldsmith or the artist wrought his masterpiece, the troubadour his song or poem. But modern New York classes, if they touch at all,

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touch in their lowest tastes, horse racing or brutalizing sport. If we had a Michael Angelo, he would be unknown of the many; if we had a Dante, he would sing for "a privileged class"—the very statement shows its ludicrous impossibility. There can be no Dantes, there can be no Michael Angelos, hardly even a Luca della Robbia or an Arnaud Daniel, until we come together again—and Arnaud, a pretty peasant boy, be bred a page at the court of an Ermengarde of Narbonne or the modern Medici have served his apprenticeship at some fine handicraft. So at least dreamed Miss Ravenel; John Haviland would sigh a little, when he came down there on his visit and listened to these views of hers—very gently though. "By all means, try. But I fear you forget the modern proletariat. They had no proletariat in Florence and Provence, for they had no machinery. All handicraft is refining labor, may in any age become an art; machinery breeds the proletariat. And they had no class corresponding to our operatives, our saleswomen; they made fine things for themselves with hand and eye, not cheap cotton for the Asiatic millions on a power loom, nor did they forge crass iron for ugly railings or Krupp guns. And even the selling of an object, into the making of which the maker's heart and soul has entered—the more so if the seller was the very maker—has the inspi-

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ration of personal relation, human appreciation. They had no department stores. They had no hives of machinery, turning human souls into machines, turning them out at the evening whistle tired with the very tedium, the soullessness of it, too jaded for all but the red pepper of pleasure, liquor, sensuous enjoyment, gambling on the races." But Mary would not let herself be discouraged.

"If there are other people—and we know there are—leading higher lives, with higher pleasures, should we not show them to them? No, you know I don't mean Browning readings or Kreutzer sonatas, or even pictures or books, but all the gentler life, the indefinable totality of the life a lady—any lady—may lead. They need not be rich for that. To be sure, they must get into the country now and then, and care more for books and music and less for matinéés, and they must see gentlefolk until they can notice what is gentle."

"I have a new recruit for you," John had said. "Mamie Rastacq, she would be a drawing card."

"Mrs Rastacq!"

"She has fallen in love with you, it appears. Have you seen her much? She is quite in earnest. And, do you know, I am by no means sure she would do it badly. She *is* a lady—in spite of all. And she is full of intelligence and a certain charm. She quite

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pleaded with me for an invitation—said she would wear only her simplest dresses.”

“As far as that goes, nothing would be too good,” said Miss Ravenel indignantly. “Everyone is to come as he naturally is, without condescension of any kind.”

“Mamie is quite too clever to condescend, except that she may stoop to conquer some of your young men. Don’t you, by the way, find the young men rather difficult?”

“Well,” said Miss Ravenel, “I haven’t asked any young men, except, of course, Fritz Köllner. You see, I’m working among girls, and I don’t know the corresponding men. I did try one, a salesman I had known in a Baltimore store for many years, and he was quite impossible. I mean, he posed. Then I asked Miss Aylwin to find me some, and she said she didn’t know any. After all, I’m not trying to elevate young men!” The girl laughed.

“The development should be even,” said John demurely. “But about poor Mamie,” persisted Haviland. “She hasn’t got to the stage of good works, but she’s not without faith. In you, at all events. Poor Grace could never influence her—perhaps she was so near her age. Where did you know her?”

“And I’m ten years younger! As if I could in-

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fluence a Mrs Antoine Rastacq!" said Mary, blushing. "Oh, I have met her several times—now I remember, she did say something about industrial schools—or rather the possibility of a big private day and evening school, in housekeeping, cooking, the minor arts of life—it was at Mrs Gower's dinner."

"How did Freddy get on?"

"Mr Wiston was a dear—they all adored him—the New York women told me, all of them separately, that they knew he was a 'real swell' and had no idea such a one could be so nice!"

"And Mr Rhodes?"

"Well, they liked him, but not quite so well. He was too fond of trying psychological experiments. You know, Mrs Bernard could not come; still, he was very good. To do the girls justice, they came with the possibility of a flirtation—still less, an engagement—almost too carefully put out of their minds. It was not quite natural. Had any of the men proposed, I am sure the answer would have been, 'Sir, you forget yourself!'"

"That is not quite natural," twinkled John.

"You know they understood the nature of the experiment as well as I did. They were fully informed that there was a difference in our social positions; what the differences were, they were left to find out for themselves. Yet nothing would induce

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them to believe that my Baltimore friend was a gentleman or that Mr Wiston wasn't, though the one was stiff as a poker and Freddy made almost a buffoon of himself trying to amuse them! But they were all the more terribly conscious of their several stations in life!"

"I see the difficulty of getting a proper reaction from self-conscious elements," laughed John. "It is social chemistry you are trying. It needs great heat. That, I suppose, was the ardent Dr Rhodes's excuse——"

"I haven't told you anything about Dr Rhodes?" said Miss Ravenel in some dismay.

"No, but your grandmother has. She said she had to ask him how his wife was, one day at breakfast."

"You may laugh, Mr Haviland, but I don't see why such meetings of different social classes should not lead to marriage! I think the last thing to consider is equality of fortune. There should be *disparity* of wealth—the rich should wed the poor—and if different social classes came together, it would humanize society as a whole."

"You have a very beautiful hat on, Miss Ravenel," said John.

"I am sure, I wish Miss Aylwin could have married Fritz Köllner," insisted the girl. "He was

painfully in love with her. But she would not look at him. She would not even let it be known that she had been a typewriter, and all the women—even the New York working girls—took her for a lady.”

“How did you come to know her?”

“I met her on the train. She has promised to teach for me—that is, to take a Sunday-school class—she says she cannot teach anything else. She is a churchwoman. But she is rather a puzzle to me. However, she is very nice about the Laurel Run girls. She showed them how to make over their gowns. Laurel Run, you must know, is the name of the watch factory. She had one or two beautiful dresses herself.”

“Did the watch girls wear dinner dresses?”

“I did not want them to look different from the others, and they didn’t either after the first day. They all had white muslins, and Miss Aylwin cut out the low necks. They sat that night—there were two of them—next Mr Wiston and Köllner, and it was pretty to see how afraid they were of each other.”

“Freddy is a little gentleman,” said John.

“He said their modesty was infectious. He didn’t dare take his eyes off his plate! Then they looked at my grandmother, and Miss Brevier—my grandmother wore her old white lace, only no dia-

monds. We drew the line at diamonds—pretty dresses they could have themselves.”

“You must ask Mamie Rastacq. But I don’t see how low-cut gowns represent the higher life——”

“Not the higher life,” frowned the girl. “Only life as it is. We mustn’t disguise anything that we do. They will teach us, if it is a wrong. So, I had wine at dinner. Some of the men had never seen wine in a decent place. We should lead no one into temptation; but everyone must learn to resist it.”

“I am sure they are the better for the visit,” John ended gravely.

“And they have all promised to help in my classes next year!” laughed Miss Ravenel, the woman that was ever present in this young person giving place to the girl again. “And the best of the Laurel Run girls are to get up classes in housekeeping during my absence in the winter.”

Mary thought sometimes of asking Austin Pinckney for her next house party—why not? She had asked his partner, David Radnor. So quickly a woman with a soul like hers adapts herself to the possibilities of good in all her life’s experiences! She thought that she would have done so, had she known Mrs Pinckney at all. In the next winter, she made occasion to meet Austin’s wife—yet even then she did not. How poor Austin, had he known it, would

have had his heart lightened, that terrible summer! He never heard from her. He was sure that he should never hear from her again. He used to go the houses where he knew the people knew her, in the autumn, as they came back to town; he would talk assiduously to the very dullest of their common acquaintances, full of yearning hope that there might be some mention of her name. Yet in October, when Miss Ravenel went to stay with the Havilands at Garrison's on the Hudson, John came up from town one night, annoyed that he had not even persuaded Pinckney to come up and pass a night.

"He'd be just the man for one of your experimental house parties," said the unsuspecting John.

It was not until late that winter that she saw him again, at a casual dinner party, at the Ralstons', dull rich people, but very helpful to her in her charities. She did not speak to him, but as she drew aside to let him pass before (he was taking Mrs Ralston in) she saw that his face was quite white. He only bowed: she had expected him to shake hands. And after dinner the girl in her gained the upper hand and she made pretext of a concert and "went on."

XLIII

MEANTIME our hero, when returned from West Virginia, had found the affairs of the striking miners already forgotten in the extraordinary events that had been happening in Wall Street. That Mr Phineas W. Tamms had been compelled to make an assignment he was aware; that Mr Augustus Markoff would be his assignee he had suspected; but that his affairs—not to say his hash—should be so speedily settled that the newspapers should already be advertising Markoff's fee was a surprise even to a fellow-student familiar with that gentleman's nimble wits. He read, in the *Evening Mail*:

“*Largest lawyer's fee on record.* It is reported that Augustus Markoff, whose success in extricating Phineas W. Tamms from his late embarrassments has amazed and dazzled Wall Street, has been tendered the sum of \$250,000 for his services.”

And more surprising still:

“*Lease of the Allegheny Central.* It is rumored that the Allegheny Central, whose recent skyrocketing performances have puzzled the Street, has been leased to the Allegheny Pacific on a guaranty of ten per cent.”

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The bunghole lease the barrel! And ten per cent instead of six! The audacity of the thing amazed him. Its charter forbade it to pay more than six per cent, or the State could step in and take the road: for it had been built in the days when railroads were first chartered and public ownership was thought a possibility. The road itself could only divide six, but Austin could easily see how a sharp lawyer could devise a scheme by which its stock could be sold, leased, or "trusted" to a corporation of another State which might, directly or indirectly, give a higher return. But who had done it? He had left their people in control, and Mr Gresham was not likely to have advised handing it over, for any consideration, to the Allegheny Pacific. So he had gone to the office, and been immediately called in consultation with the two seniors. Mr T. Levison Gower was there, asking what he should do with his wife's stock.

"I see nothing whatever but to take their ten per cent, as long as they can pay it—or sell," Mr Gresham was saying. "And if you didn't sell at a thousand, you'd hardly sell at present prices. These show that people haven't much confidence in his management."

"Whose management?" asked Austin.

"Markoff's. But perhaps you can tell us something more. What do they say in Baltimore?"

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“I haven’t been to Baltimore since the day after the special meeting. Then it was to be arranged that the new preferred stock was to be canceled, the attempted lease of the Pacific to the Central called off, and under your instructions I took over one or two of Tamms’s large loans for the Miners’ Bank—enough, I understood, to render Tamms’s control improbable. Then I saw that Tamms had failed.”

“Oh, yes,” grumbled Radnor, “Tamms is overboard. Gresham got his wish. He didn’t go to Dannemora jail, but he did worse—he put himself unreservedly in Markoff’s hands. Markoff paid his debts in full and saved his reputation. The old man had no use for that. The grateful creditors are giving Markoff a quarter million. Tamms is in a sanatorium. That is because Markoff personally shouldered his bad debts. The good ones were sold out.”

“But,” said Austin, “I still don’t see—didn’t Markoff keep his promises?”

“Every one of them. The preferred stock was canceled. That ruined Tamms. His loans which had Central collateral were sold out—somebody bought them. Somebody called and took up our Miners’ Bank loans, paid principal and interest. The bank couldn’t refuse. Somebody got short of Allegheny Pacific—and then long of Allegheny Central.

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But your Markoff is a man of his word. Instead of leasing the Allegheny Pacific to the Allegheny Central, he has leased the Allegheny Central to the Allegheny Pacific. All his promises were performed. But you made some promise in return, I think?"

"I promised him a week's grace and secrecy—you approved by telegram."

"Perfectly true. But in that week Tamms had to fail, and it is possible—mind you, I do not say I know, but this is a free country and a man can buy or sell as he chooses—it is just possible that Mr Markoff, on his own account, was buying some Allegheny Central stock. At all events, Tamms has gone to a sanatorium, and Markoff has privately intimated that he hopes we will remain as counsel for the Allegheny Central Railroad."

"Damn his soul!" murmured Mr Radnor, as Mr Gresham ended.

"That's none of our business," interposed the sensible Lucie. "I can only say I hope you will be counsel, sir. It is your duty——"

"I rather incline to think so myself. Moreover, now that he can afford to, I suspect Mr Markoff means to be honest. I intend so to advise him."

Lucie laughed. "To think I had the man at my house last summer! I saw he was bound to get on—my wife has an instinct at discovering geniuses.

I suppose he'll have a house of his own now. Coming uptown, Pinckney?"

"I think I will—I am rather tired."

"Your wife, I know, is at Newport. So you have taken the Ambrosini cottage for the summer?"

Austin did not know it, but it was not the first time he had to pretend to a knowledge of his wife's affairs. He was anxious to get back even to the empty house. He did not know why. His wife always wrote to the office.

"I am dining alone myself," said Gower, as the brougham rolled off noiselessly. "Won't you come with me? I'll drop you at your house, if you must change."

"I—if I may let you know when I get there," said Austin. "There may be some message for me."

On the hall table was the usual heap of bills and business circulars; nothing else; it was late in June; nothing else. Oh, yes, there was a telegram—it was from Dorothy, begging him to come to Newport at once, "matter of importance to Daisy." He ran back to the carriage where Lucie was placidly waiting, puffing at a large cigar. That honest gentleman had always had a quiet conscience, and at fifty his digestion was unimpaired.

"I have had a message from my wife. I must go to Newport."

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“Well, you can’t go till twelve o’clock; you may as well dine with me as anywhere. You needn’t dress; we shall be quite alone, and the house is in brown hollands.”

There was something friendly about this man. As they sat in the palatial dining hall, Austin reflected on the contrast between it and his last week’s surroundings. He would like to bring Zappi there. He wondered if the broad-shouldered engineer would still want his three plates of ice cream. He ventured to tell Gower a little about the strike, and found a sympathetic listener.

Coming home at ten, he had the curiosity to return by way of the Havilands’. Their house was closed and dark. Wandering down the hill, he looked down the cross street where was Miss Ravenel’s apartment; it all looked dark. Of course he did not know her window; probably she had gone home to Ravenel. Then he pulled himself together for an idle fool and went home to pack his grip.

Well, why shouldn’t he go on loving her? Dorothy missed nothing. Other men before him had had their private shrine—other men, well working in the world, their secret consecration. If he might worship her in his heart, he might endure the sightless eyes. Surely, it could do her no harm. He wished that she might marry some good man. Who was there good enough?

It was a marvel that men, free men, could live in the world and not be at her feet. She promised—for she was slow in maturing—to be still more beautiful. Would men see it then? No, he wished that she might never marry; he wished she had been plain, unnoticed always, for he had loved her just as much.

The last was the thought of his feverish dawn, the hour when the heart is slow, the half-dreaming hour when all one's acquired nature seems to go, all built-up rules of conduct melt away. Then came the full day, and the brave sea air, as he paced the deck of the little steamboat. Dorothy, at the pretentious "cottage," was waiting breakfast for him. She gave him no other greeting than to plunge at once into business.

"Mama has telegraphed me that Daisy must be married this summer, and she wants it in our house."

"Married? Whom to?"

"Puzzi, of course. You know they've been at Rome. It seems Puzzi was there. But she doesn't want the marriage there, and it can't be in Philadelphia in August. She hopes we've got a house. So I thought of the Ambrosini villa. You know, it's always to let."

"Can we afford it?"

"What nonsense! I suppose mama'll chip in

something. But then she's got to get the trousseau, and I've no doubt he's asked for a settlement. Those Italians always do. *He's* not getting married at Camden— Anyhow I suppose mama feels she must make the best of it, and this is the place to do it. A marquis counts, in Newport. The rent is only three thousand. I see your friend Markoff has made lots of money. You were in that railroad business, too. Haven't you made anything?"

"I am only a lawyer. I get my share of the firm's earnings——"

"Well, you ought to ask for more. Markoff has actually hired one of the Duval houses, and Mrs Rastacq has asked him to dinner."

"You ought to have married him," said Austin bitterly.

"Well, he made love to me at Cambridge——" Her husband's blank look of horror quelled for a moment her impetuosity. She changed the subject to the wedding and the guests.

"You are right—there need be no trouble about money," said Austin at the end of the conversation.

Pinckney went through that summer with a sense of personal degradation. It was degrading to have to give away his sister-in-law to an ape like Puzzi. But for the poor girl's sake it had to be done. Certain business affairs, which, for very protection, he

had pass through his hands, made it all the harder. There was a woman to be bought off, a blackmailer to be frightened. And Austin could not tell the girl all he heard about her noble husband. She arrived, with her mother, only a week before the ceremony. Even Mrs Somers was for a moment shaken; the Major had sought out Austin at the New York Club one day and told him what all Paris knew of Puzzi's past; at his request she said something of it to her daughter. She answered that she did not care so long as he had not cheated at cards.

Austin stayed as little as he could at Newport. The festivities over, he went into the Maine woods on a hunting trip. Settled in the city for the autumn, he tried to lose himself in hard work. Dorothy had begun her usual round of autumn visits; Mrs Somers had sold her Philadelphia house and gone to live in Paris. Puzzi's drafts were usually dated from Monte Carlo.

From one thing only, that dreadful season, did Austin derive a little pleasure—it was a letter containing the announcement that “at the request of Powhatan Post, No. 11,262, he had been elected an honorary member of the American Labor League.” He remembered sadly how he had planned that way of working with Mary Ravenel. Well, he would have to carry out the work alone.

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Still, when November came, he began to watch for her. He would walk uptown by Rivington Street. He frequented the Columbian Club—even if he met her father, he might speak of her. But that gentleman never appeared; finally one day he asked the Major about him and heard for the first time of his marriage. Then John Haviland had told him of her visit at Garrison's—and he had not dared to accept his invitation. He must first know whether she wanted to avoid him. Her will must be done.

Then had come that dinner at the Ralstons'. His wife had wanted to go, and he always went with her when she asked him. They arrived late, and the room was full; suddenly it swam before him; he became conscious of her presence in the farther corner. He was sent in immediately, with the hostess. Passing by him, she bowed; he had hoped—it was so long since they had met—they might have shaken hands. Her face was very white.

At dinner she was some distance away, but he could steal a glance occasionally. She was as beautiful as an angel, but she looked still pale. Could she be ill? He longed for the moment to come, after dinner——

The men were forever over their cigars. Would old Ralston never make the move? Coming into the

drawing-room, one sweep of his eyes told him that they were too late. Miss Ravenel had gone. She had avoided him.

XLIV

WHEN Beatrice denied to him her salutation, Dante wrote a poem which made the world her debtor. Poor Austin could not do this—he had no right, of this unmarried girl, to claim even the courtesy of a bow. But now, his soul beat out its wings against the bars. He could not live without it—he could not live, he could not go on living. True, a fragment of a poem crossed his mind—it was a little verse of St. Ursula:

“ St. Ursula, upon her path to heaven
Once met a pilgrim lying on her way—”

How did the verse go on?

“ His limbs
Were in the dust, and on his breast was blood.
He craved a cup of water—”

Surely, her salutation, her speaking to him, as she might to the meanest of humanity, when they met—it was not his fault that they met—was but as the cup of water to him!

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“Ursula

Drew back lest she should soil her robe, went on
Her way to heaven and was sainted there—
But all the damned of hell cry out at her.”

Was he of the damned? Was this what happened to men when they went lost? God knows, he would not have soiled her robe—no, nor touched it even—but now, he could not go on. Yet still, though she held him in horror, his heart would not believe his love was evil. His mind could put the thing in plainest words—pursuit were despicable, even voiceless love a sin—and his heart would not credit it. What world was this he was living in? And why had he not sooner been a man? So raged his thoughts as he took his way home on foot; Dorothy had gone on to the first great ball of the winter; he, for once, had bluntly refused. The night was very cold, the rain freezing on the sidewalk as it fell.

She scorned him, condemned him, that was clear. Yet what had he ever told her?—and perhaps, were he to tell her, she might have pity. The spoken word, indeed, had been an insult; yet she could not, more plainly, have cast him from her. She had even fled from him at Ravenel; it was clear now that the letter had been but an excuse.

He crossed the street, and Madison Square, to lower Fifth Avenue. A young girl, as he passed the

shadow of a higher building, mutely accosted him; whatever she may have meant to say died upon her lips, but she stood in his way. With a sense of sudden shock he saw her face, how white and fair it was; her slender figure, still, on this December night, clad in a shirt waist; she shivered with the cold as he looked at her.

“Poor child,” he said, “are you hungry?”

It needed not her faint *Yes* to tell him so. What could he do? He could give her money. She had turned to walk with him; they were passing by an all-night chop house with lighted windows. He passed a bill into her little hands and asked her to go in and buy herself what she wanted. Very shyly, she answered that they would not let her in alone. Well, what did it matter. *He* need not shrink from the dust of the road. He went in with her. Some other women, and men, were there; Austin observed that the young girl did not seem to know them, nor they her. They stared at her, even curiously, as if she did not belong there. Hot soups and chops were brought for the girl; for Austin, glass after glass of whisky. This, after all, was what men did. The girl looked at him anxiously. She was pitiaibly fair. She told him she was out of work, with a dying father; but somehow he felt that the usual tale might be the truth.

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When she had eaten, they hastened out, and coming into the cold, Austin ordered a cab. "Tell the driver your address, after I am gone—" There was no use preaching a sermon; he only pressed a small roll of bills into her hand. "And do buy yourself a coat." He would at least try to save another soul that night; he was not too worthless to do that; the rest must be with God. If he could not preach to her, he had done her no harm.

"I cannot take this— Are you going to leave me?" But this time the poor child said it with a blush. Some impulse of pity made Austin say:

"My child— If you loved anyone, you would not ask me—" The girl looked up at him frankly, like a friend—and yet in wonder.

"Here," he said, handing her a card on which he had written the address of one of John's agencies. "Go there to-morrow, and perhaps they can find you work—" But the girl was now looking at him wistfully. He turned his face away. "Remember your promise to get a coat."

"I am so sorry," she only said. And somehow the note of compassion, even in the poor outcast's voice, for the first time broke Austin down.

But going home, he grasped a decanter of whisky and drank a tumblerful. "I cannot get drunk," he

thought. "That is what men do. Why cannot I get drunk?" He smoked and tried to read. He drank again. Finally, at four or five, he went to his room, rather by way of avoiding Dorothy than with any desire for sleep.

Austin's soul, perhaps, was very nigh to foundering that night. Yet withal it may be doubted whether his soul was so nearly lost in all its sorrow as in the pleasure, the frivolities, the surface joys of those years before at Newport which had culminated in the satin walls of Mamie Rastacq's cottage.

And he felt no shame in the morning. Surely not for his hour with the poor outcast; hardly even for his drunkenness. He had tried it as men try a drug, and proved it idle. He walked downtown and went to work. In the afternoon he had the curiosity to call at John's—or rather Mrs Haviland's—rescue agency. And—hardly to his surprise, but much to his gladness—he found that the young woman had really called; moreover, that the matron, for once in a hundred times, had been persuaded that her story was genuine. He did not ask her name, nor whither they had sent her. Somehow he felt, in his own despair, there might be more danger for him in the company of this poor girl—than in any Mamie Rastacq's challenges. Our hero was no Dominic—the Spaniard sainted for virginity, who founded the Inquisition—

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the chaste, only, can be so cruel, the Puritan so fanatic. He was only a man, and just now caring nothing for his own soul, but having yet "the infinite compassion of the pure."

But so—perhaps for a week or two—his life was left to tremble in the balance. And then one day his wife wanted him to go to the Monday Club; it was to meet in the great palace of an Ohio millionaire, and the lion of the occasion, by an incongruity not unusual in New York, the Russian Nihilist prince, Koprine. Dorothy cared nothing about the Nihilist, except when he told stories of his life when, as a boy, he had been page to the Czar, but she did care about the dancing that followed after supper. Austin knew Koprine; and after his address the latter sought him out and engaged him in conversation, regardless of the *queue* of fluttering fair the hostess was marshaling to present to him.

"Who is that handsome man with a jaw like a pirate monopolizing my prince? You ought to know, Miss Ravenel—you know all the queer people. Not Dorothy's husband? Well, well."

Austin looked up and saw her behind his hostess, with Grace. She was evidently going to be presented by their hostess to Koprine. He stood aside from the big Russian, who had by this time risen, and watched her. But it was Grace who spoke to Koprine; Miss

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Ravenel turned to Pinckney and stretched out her hand frankly.

“Why did you not speak to me the other night?”

“It is not my world,” said Austin Pinckney slowly.

“It *is* mine——”

The dancing was beginning; a boy came and claimed her; he watched them dance. He would not have danced with her for worlds. But he still stood there, watching them——

The youth appeared to think that she belonged to him, and so came back, after five minutes, and left her, where Austin was standing, watching. She was now all aflush; she had been pale before.

“It is very hot——”

“Come into the other room. Shall I get some water?”

“If you please. I will wait here, in the window.”

Austin got a goblet of water and returned.

“Why did you not get yourself some?”

“I did not stop to get another glass.”

“Why have you not been to see me? I have been staying at Gracie’s——”

“I was afraid you would not be at home.” There was almost a little gasp in his voice; the woman, now suddenly, looked at him.

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“I should like to talk to you about Laurel Run—the Watch Trust is worse than ever. But you look tired to-night—don’t you want to get yourself some champagne?”

“Only a little water,” said Austin, his lips dry.

“Here, take this,” said Miss Ravenel impulsively. The room, for a moment, to Austin swam. Then he took the glass—she had but touched it—and drank of the water slowly.

Coming home, he could only say to himself, St. Ursula—St. Ursula. But oh, thank God, thank God! How nobly she had done it! What miracle had led her to the simple action? She had seen, somehow, that he, too, that night, must be saved.

XLV

THAT was the winter of the first great effort to uplift New York City politics; and it was his speeches in this campaign that first brought Pinckney to the public attention. There was a vigor and vitality about them, an ideality combined with practical good sense, that few men, of the side the *Sun* called “academes,” could show. They excited but a languid interest in Dorothy, however. Even when a sympathetic friend pointed out—it was Markoff him-

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self—that politics might lead to Washington and an ambassadorship, Dorothy only shrugged her snowy shoulders. Markoff was quite free to loose his admiration on her now. In fact, Dorothy had discovered a fascinating revenge in making him want to kiss her again; better than cutting him. Moreover, Markoff was decidedly a man to know. His house parties were distinctly, that year, the thing. And he had never asked her. The new game, bridge, had come in vogue—imported from Constantinople—and it was said that ladies, at his house, played for money. Dorothy thought it would be delicious to play for real money. She shrugged her shoulders, and put one hand up to the bow she had disarranged; the Hebrew followed her gloved hand with his warm brown eyes.

“I should hate to live in Washington,” she said. “New York is good enough for me. And an ambassadorship costs money——”

“Oh,” laughed Markoff, “not if you are a reformer!”

“I mean, you must have the money to spend. In London, even in Rome or Paris, you are ridiculous under fifty thousand a year.”

“A hundred is better——”

“A hundred is better—and you’ve got it—but poor Austin will never be rich.”

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“*He’s* got a wife though—there must be an ambassadress——”

Dorothy, looking at him, wondered just how far it would be fun to let him go. Well, she wanted the invitation. . . .

Meantime, Miss Ravenel had made Dorothy’s acquaintance. First, at a woman’s lunch, she had found herself next her; she had drawn her aside and tried to interest her in the “social intercourse plan”—as John used laughingly to term their idea of teaching the working classes how to have a society. But Dorothy had shown not the slightest interest in the condition of any classes but their own. “Why don’t you speak to Austin about it?” Dorothy laughed (Miss Ravenel had begun by telling Dorothy that she knew her husband); “he’s always mulling about the slums and the condition of the people. I believe they have just as good a time as we do; if they don’t, it’s their own fault.” But Mary could not believe that there was not more in her than this, and would not give over.

Perhaps, correlative to Austin’s ecstasy, Miss Ravenel had had some moments of trepidation after their last interview. She had resolutely dismissed them, however. She was trying hard enough (perhaps unconsciously) not to see his love; but it was that reality which made her so sure that Austin would

acquit her of anything but friendliness. She had been sorry for him; she desired to be a friend to him; so, womanlike, she began upon his wife.

There is a story of a miner who, in Mexico, exploring an old abandoned mine, tapping the walls to find the hidden water, found nothing but the dull note of earth, until, at the very last, a different sound invited more careful search; the probe went through, an opening was made, and in the secret treasure chamber, in the dress of three centuries before, heaped up with rubies and with turquoises, an Aztec princess lay as if asleep. Mary, full of faith in other women as she was full of the happiness of life herself, could not believe there was no treasure chamber. One wall after another she tried with Dorothy, but only one door would open, that of the world of "society." Only in one other woman had Miss Ravenel ever been so impressed by this; and that, strangely enough, was Miss Aylwin; but in her it was at least ideal; "society," to her imagination, represented a sort of fairyland. And Mary Ravenel had not given up the quest—long since—perhaps too soon?—abandoned by Austin—when, a year later, he told her of his going West. For he had permitted himself one call each winter, and this was the second. Triumphant in that year's work—it was the first year of John's election, the second of his own fellowship with human-

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ity—his heart and conscience now at rest, our hero had come—in reality, not avowedly—to lay his sheaf of leaves at her feet and have her tell him which were leaves of weed and which were laurel leaves. For insensibly, already, to Austin, this woman had come to assay his life. And it was she who had shown him the way into the lives of men.

Mary was at Miss Brevier's this time, and that old lady, evidently somnolent, was upon the sofa. Yet her presence had made Austin bold to say—bold to lay, in his secret allusion, both his past and his future duty, for her to judge. They had again been discussing Dante—Austin remembered well enough—had she forgotten?—their word on the subject at Laurel Run—and imperceptibly he had been led to take against himself the side he only had to justify. The talk had led from the *Vita Nuova* to Dante's future; to Gemma Donati; to the real effect of Beatrice on his life. Men and women may together discuss all things to-day; talk of love, indeed, is usually a triviality; neither of them, certainly not Miss Ravenel, was in the least self-conscious.

“No noble love, I am sure, would harm a life,” he had been led to say. “No love, I am sure, can be wrong——”

“Love may not be wrong; the telling of it may be——”

“ I do not believe it harmed Beatrice—if, indeed, she ever knew of it—and Dante surely——”

“ It is Gemma Donati—Dante’s wife, the mother of his children—who is first to be considered. And even as to Dante himself, I do not feel sure ; do you? ”

It had been on Austin’s lips to plead for such love as a consecration ; to argue to her—as the poor man had so often done to himself—for the flame as almost vestal, to be cherished in holiness, despite fortuitous ties which (after all) were things of human convention if not of the flesh. But he saw into Miss Ravenel’s eyes, and found that he could not. Then, too, he had been studying Dante’s life, so that her words came to him with a touch of divination. He had read that Dante’s love had not lasted even unto Beatrice’s death ; that he fell in love a second time, with Pargoletta, of Lucca ; even a third time, with a peasant maid of the Alps of Cosentino, hump-backed, and by whom he had a child. Others, indeed, say Gentucca, mentioned in the “ Purgatorio,” was a noble and beautiful maiden of Lucca with whom Dante fell in love during his exile, but Balbi, a Genoese noble, more charitably : “ Nothing is known of this Gentucca ; we will not enter into a discussion of how much she had been loved by Dante and how far he had *again* been faithless to the memory of Beatrice ; let us pass over in silence the consolations or errors

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of the poor exile." Then, too, Beatrice had left him. "Si tosto come in su la soglia fui di mia seconda etade, e mutai vita, questi si tolse a me, e diessi altrui——"

But still Austin forgot that he was silent, as he looked at her. These words, of the thirtieth canto of the "Purgatorio," where he makes her say "he gave himself to others"—were written twenty-four years after Beatrice's death.

"What are you thinking of?" It was Mary Ravenel who spoke.

"I am thinking that men are liars," said he. "Did you know, Dante wrote a *sirvente* introducing the names of sixty of the greatest beauties of Florence, that he might, among the sixty, introduce her name? Yet in his sonnet of three stanzas he scrupulously explains that the second is intended for Miss Portinari, not the other lady. For, on a journey to Bologna, it had occurred to him to take another lady as his *schermo*, his screen, and when he returned he did so for this cause; and for this cause, he says in "Vita Nuova," Beatrice denied him her salutation. When he first met Beatrice it was on a May day, 1275, in the Cascine gardens; and she was eight and he was nine. If it was a lie, it is a lie that has lasted. But, as Heine says, the kitten lived long and happily for many years; Beatrice was wed to Mr Simon Bardi

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in 1287. She died about 1290. Dante began his poem in 1294; about 1314 he wrote the four 'divine cantos.' If it were a woman, and her name were Marie Bashkirtseff, we should call it silly, I suppose."

Miss Ravenel looked up puzzled. But the man had his heart in pincers and was driving red-hot needles through it.

"Tell me more about Gemma Donati," said Miss Ravenel.

"Nothing is known about Gemma Donati. Probably, she was not a good cook."

Miss Ravenel rose; and Pinckney rose, contrite. "And so you are going to hunt in the Rockies for your summer. Why don't you take Dorothy with you?"

"Dorothy?" He did not know that Miss Ravenel called her by her first name; and indeed to Dorothy she did not; but she felt then that she had to.

"I think she would like to go," said Miss Ravenel as she colored a little, but still went on bravely: "Have you asked her?"

"She likes Newport in the summer, and to be around New York."

"I think she is getting tired of it." Then, more lightly: "It must be an education in itself to be away from everything—in a tent in the mountains—the stars only above, the whole continent beneath one."

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Austin paced across the room once or twice. Then: "I will—I will ask her," said he. Then he spoke, very simply, his heart's desire: "May I write to you?"

"Why, of course." And the woman could not see that she had made his life worth living. "I shall be managing my boycott all summer. Tell me how Dorothy likes the West."

"Your boycott?"

"The Watch Trust's, I mean, at Laurel Run."

"Oh, I remember."

So Austin took his leave.

XLVI

IF Austin had hoped that contact with life's elemental conditions would tend to make its complexities pall upon her, he had reckoned without his Dorothy's temperament. For Dorothy's nature was the perennial—we will not say eternal—feminine; the woman Meredith meant when he said she would be the last thing civilized by man; also, perhaps, the woman who was first cause even of civilization when she bade her lover seek pink shells to tie around her middle and began to decorate her breast in geometrical patterns in blue woad. It is for such that even in the

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kitchen-middens of the prehistoric Maine Indians one finds bone combs and toilet articles so adorned; it is not from such that civilization will ever find its cure. The world of 1889 just suited Dorothy as it was; in the slang of the day she was precisely up to date. Her splendidly healthy body enabled her, by mere vitality, to enjoy the grand air, the riding, the exhilaration of bodily adventure; she had, too, an appreciation of scenery. But she infinitely preferred corsets and lace underwear to flannels and freedom, a city bedroom to a prairie tent, a porcelain bath to a mountain stream, people to prairies, and cards to the chase. Moreover, the people must be "her sort," people who spoke her language, talked only about each other, and played, with jealous heart-burnings, at being "it." It would be hard for us, it would have been hard even for them, to say what "it" was. Dorothy was rapidly coming to the conclusion that "it" was largely money; certainly one of "its" features was the insolent exclusion of all others from "its" society; and Dorothy in her time had lived to see the excluded become the excluder—Mark-off, for instance—and, awful to contemplate, the excluder become in turn the excluded. There was Mrs Malgam. Well, Jack Malgam had not been very rich, and "Baby" had grown middle-aged and fat. If you could not have millions of your own, Dorothy

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clear-sightedly observed, or were not unusually clever, the best anchor was a fashionable love affair ; it would have been well enough if Malgam had not died, but when he had done so, Holyoke had failed to marry her. To be sure, he was ten years younger ; but she had kept him for so long ! And now she committed the blunder of openly running after him. Then, even Arthur Holyoke (as Dorothy phrased it to herself) was not a real swell. The Rastacqs, Duvals, Einsteins, Gansevoorts, Gonzagas, Marosinis, were the real swells, Dorothy thought ; the beauty of them was, as Salisbury said of the Garter, there was no d——d merit about them. They cared nothing about America nor for being American citizens ; they lived in palaces of European model and moved in private cars and ocean steamers that they called their yachts, from Newport to Aiken or the Riviera, stopping only in New York to cut their coupons ; more secluded from the vulgar, more estranged from their country's people than is any English duke, and by the way they were the only people that could always marry into the *English* peerage, and not a man of them had ever held a civic, even a charitable, office since first (not usually too long ago) the founder of their fortunes in New York began.

Austin was dreadfully bored by them. As Carlyle might say, he could not feel that even going in a

private car justified, as an end of life, the going from one idle place to another equally empty one—certainly not the going in another fellow's private car. The great houses were to him the very lair of *ennui*. No books, only Barbizon pictures; no music but Broadway ballads and negro melodies composed by theatrical Jews; no talk but of the sort you needed wade through in galoshes to keep your very feet clean. Why be exclusive when there is so little to include? But exclusion, in America, comes high. If you would avoid the people, you must pay for it. And poor Dorothy could not even yet afford it. Had she married Petrus Gansevoort, she might have had it from the start.

So one fears that while Austin, expanding his lungs to the grand air, his heart to the great people, of the West, was hopefully scheming how they might yet model their lives on his youthful dreams, Dorothy was scheming to bring hers to a practical reality of a very different order. Even his sanguine rebuilding of their own first married happiness received a shock. "We must dare to be happy and dare to confess it," Miss Ravenel had once said to him. And then, she had quoted Amiel: "To be patient, sympathetic, tender, to hope always, like God; to love always—this is duty." Austin tried to hope; but the light of springtime, even the light that was about

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them in that Connecticut River trip of ten years ago, had faded from the sky.

But he dared to be happy. Ah, he dared to be happy. He was "happy in faith." The yearning that had been his so many years—the lonely resignation to the faith that this was all—the suicide of hope, the drugging of dreams, the blinding of eyes—poor wistful eyes, "tired with too much seeking of their love on earth"—this all was over. No longer had he to shut them to bar out his visions—visions of the face i' the cloud, the face i' the fire—the Face was here, here beyond the nearest twilight hill, here and real in every dell of gentle forest. Ah, he was happy that year. I suppose the Puritan in him should have told his conscience that he had no sense of sin; but the Catholic Carolina Pinckney in him knew that sin this could not be. The world, his heart, his very prayers to Heaven, gave him emotional certitude. He was doing right; and all was well in the world; surely God would not poison the fount that made him worship God. Yet he did not write to her, he did not need to do that; it was enough that in her grace she had him given leave.

And Dorothy, too—if the early glamour had been but a morning mist—could, in the noontide of life, be a sunny companion. She had never been shrewish or sour: and now, in the free air of the Rockies, with

her splendid health, perhaps even a little touched by his renewed devotion—she was a most pleasant companion. It was not, perhaps, the highest human relation—it was rather as if he were adventuring, in some splendid country, with a merry good fellow—or, at most, a pleasing inamorata—chance, at their journey's end, might or might not sever the relation—no hearts at risk on either side. Dorothy dressed, in the daytime, almost like a boy, a Rosalind—long soft leather leggings, an open-throated hunting shirt, and (to the bewilderment of the conventionally minded guides) not much of skirt.

Austin rather had wanted scenery and voyage life than mere hunting; they had begun in southern Colorado, worked by the Sangre del Cristo range to the country of northern New Mexico; heading in a general way for the Grand Cañon of the Colorado, whose wonders were then but little known. But one afternoon (they always had to begin camp by four o'clock), armed, of course, with his Winchester, but otherwise alone (a Winchester is company—any sportsman will well know what I mean), he struck the trail of a bear, a grizzly, he suspected—not that he could tell from the tracks, but it was, in that country, the most likely kind. The trail led down the mountain, into a little cañon, perhaps only some few yards wide at first, and full of raspberry bushes

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and the fallen, slippery trunks of dead sycamore trees. He could now hear the bear crashing ahead, and Pinckney, with all the impulsiveness of his early youth, followed after. Pretty soon he got a shot, and then another; but their only effect was slightly to accelerate the creature's speed. Now and then he saw traces of blood upon the bushes which (perhaps somewhat inconsequently) encouraged him to go on. The cañon was now considerably deeper; and the bear, as if to escape from it, clambered upon the butt end of a huge sycamore which lay, its branches pointing downward, so high that they appeared to touch the rocky ledge that bounded the cañon on its higher side.

Austin followed, balancing himself upon the peeled and slippery trunk; this was easy enough at first, but became harder as its volume narrowed. Finally, he had to sit on the tree trunk astride; the bear, too, seemed to be having trouble and moved slower and slower. Unexpectedly to Austin it stopped; the strong branches, after all, did not reach to the little cliff; and, to Austin's horror, the grizzly began to retrace its steps. Austin, sitting on the trunk some twenty yards behind, had chosen that moment to reload his Winchester.

"Stand up!" called a voice from the wall behind him. Austin stood up, without looking around, and

fired hastily at the approaching grizzly. At the same moment he heard a second rifle shot, and the huge creature, clutching a moment convulsively at the brittle, silvery twigs, fell with a heavy crash into the bushes beneath.

"Hope you'll pardon me intruding," said the stranger, with the usual Western burr to the *r*, but otherwise in perfect English. "I heard your shots and thought I'd see what it was. Though I reckoned there might be a grizzly in the cañon, and it ain't exactly a place where two is company and three is none."

"I am, on the contrary, deeply in your debt. It was your shot killed him; he was coming on too fast for my inexperience."

"Oh, I don't know!" smiled the other. "Anyhow, you'll forgive my introducing myself too soon. I hate to interfere with any gentleman's shot." (He pronounced the *t* in gentleman, which is unusual even with the educated Westerner.) "My name's Armitage. I call myself at home when I'm in Michigan, but it's the country down below there that I've tied up to." Mr Armitage indicated vaguely a sweep of the horizon that might include anything from the San Cristobal Mountains to the Pecos River.

When a man has just saved your life from a grizzly, it is customary, even in temperance circles,

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to invite him to take a drink. Pinckney accordingly did so, declining at the same time his name and qualities.

"From New York, are you? Well, sir, that comes in quite handy. I was just about wanting to see a man from New York. Take the first drink yourself; you got a little nearer the b'ar than I did." For Austin, climbing downward, had reached the base of the rock on which the other stood. Austin laughed, and half filling the silver cup he drained it; then handed cup and flask to the other as he scrambled up the scarp of the little cliff.

"You must come to dinner with us."

"Perhaps you'd like to have me help you skin that there grizzly."

"I certainly should, particularly as I don't know how; my wife, I am sure, would like to have it, if you'd give me your share——"

"Oh, it's yours all right. Is your wife at home in New York——"

"No, she's here in camp, and you'll meet her if you'll come to dinner."

"Great Scott, Mr Pinckney! I'll go skin that b'ar alone. You go and tell her you're all right. She'll have heard the shooting——"

"She won't worry—she'll think it was a prairie chicken—or a deer."

“Five shots and another gun? Why, a child would know it was a b’ar— No, sir, you go home. And load up first—though I don’t think the mate’s between here and your camp. You ain’t in Wall Street.”

Carefully reloading his own, Mr Armitage made his way through the raspberries to where the bear lay, unsheathing a formidable hunting knife that was at his belt.

Pinckney renewed his thanks and followed the advice; not so much to tranquilize his wife as to tell her of their unexpected guest and suggest some changes in her apparel. It was an hour before Armitage arrived, lugging the bearskin; he had evidently washed both himself and it, and looked, Austin thought, very like a gentleman indeed. He was evidently much struck, and afterwards a little puzzled, by Dorothy; he lent only a courteous attention to what she said, but Austin noted his eyes were straying to her all the evening.

Armitage, it turned out, had lived twenty years in the West, in what he called God’s country—a phrase objectionably suggestive of brass-band Americans, but used by him in all simplicity to indicate the lofty plains that stretch from the Colorado to the cactus barrens. He had not the alleged Western habit of asking questions; but it developed that

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Pinckney was a lawyer and that they were heading, in a general way, for the Grand Cañon. He said nothing that night; but the next morning (making, as Dorothy said, his dinner call like a civilized being) he diffidently suggested that he might go with them thither. He mentioned apologetically that he had purchased a Spanish grant "there away"—also that he might be of some assistance to them as a guide. Pinckney was more than willing; grateful, in fact. Even Dorothy had taken rather a liking to him.

His "little grant" turned out to be a tract of land about the size of Wales. And it lay along a river which, rising with a bed level with the surrounding country, ended, somewhere on the Rio Grande, with a cañon almost as deep as the Colorado cañon itself. They took it—with the assistance of a railway, leaving their outfit in camp—in two days on the way. Armitage, though a bachelor, maintained a most comfortable ranch; Dorothy was given everything but a lady's maid. And in the evening he developed his scheme.

"You know Michigan is a great fruit State. Well, I know the kind of country it will grow in—melons and plums and even nectarines, also corn and tobacco. They're the most profitable crops. Also, I am something of an engineer, and I surveyed this tract for years before I bought it. This river will

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irrigate nearly the whole of it—all the mesa and bottom land. There's 2,000 square miles in the tract, as the survey calls. The irrigated land in Colorado, Grand River, sells at \$100 an acre, but call it \$10. At 500,000 acres there's \$5,000,000."

"How much will it cost to irrigate it?"

"Permanently and well, over a million dollars. Then there should be a repair fund to produce \$30,000 a year, say half a million more. That's the money I'm going to get in Wall Street." Like all Western men Armitage was absolutely confident of his fortunes and equally convinced that Wall Street would look at them in the same light. Austin forbore to disabuse him—moreover, the enterprise seemed really a genuine one. And Armitage's only terror was lest Washington should hear of it and hold his river navigable. That would mean that he must get an Act of Congress. And that would mean a hold up in the Senate. The senators, he explained, in the West, were used to getting irrigable lands for themselves, and have the Government pay for the irrigation.

Farming land does not usually strike an American as synonymous with wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. Particularly in New York the private capitalist has seen too much money go out, to the West and South, and too little come back. No rents,

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of course, are collectible from agricultural land; it is contrary to the American spirit to pay rent for farms; while even the business men in towns, across Missouri, regard rent as a peculiarly useless form of expenditure; and mortgages, of course, come home to roost. So reasoned Austin, and suggested to Armitage to try a nearer centre—Chicago or Boston, where not so many thousand schemes were jostling for favor—or even London, for your Englishman is bred to regard real estate as a solid investment and farming a remunerative business, nor is he feazed by the remoteness of an Arizona valley, all American distances being alike to his undeveloped imagination. But Armitage was firm in the belief that the only real Money Power is intrenched in Wall Street.

“As I understand it,” he would say, “we are playing a great national game, and you gentlemen in New York hold the box of chips. The chips are of no real value in themselves, but we can’t play the game without them. New York sits swapping chips on a commission, and the rest of the country is sweating to produce intrinsic value. And every ten or twenty years you call us down, and we have to cash our values in chips.” Thus Armitage would talk unconscious Ruskin, while, like the Ancient Mariner, he held his interlocutor with dreamy, speculative eye.

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“The Money Power”—he always spoke this phrase in capitals—“is there and we have got to kotow to it.”

“Wanting a little of the same yourself,” smiled Austin.

“When I get it, I’ll buy a seat in the United States Senate and bust up that whole outfit,” laughed the other. “This country’s been governed by the clever folks too long. I’d like to give the honest fools a chance.”

There was no railway to the cañon then; they rejoined their outfit at Flagstaff, Arizona; thence there was a two days’ ride through a well-wooded plain, the San Cristobal Mountains robed from peak to plain in spotless snow, though it was still only October. It did not need this, however, to tell them they were very high: the air, the dry hills, the deeply carved water courses, the look of the atmosphere bore witness also. Austin was wonderfully exhilarated. He mentally resolved that if ever again the smirch of the city, the stain and the sorrow of civilization, became too much for him, he would know where to come for an air to blow it all away. He thought, too, of Miss Ravenel—it was permitted him now to think of her, thank God!—in the differing beauty, the drowsy summer luxuriance of the low-lying Laurel valley. He did not need to write to her; he

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could bear even not to see her, now that his offense had been condoned. There was joy in living anyway, that she was in the world. The desert was peopled for him with a dreaming face.

But to poor Dorothy the desert was beginning to be lonely—or, rather, she ceased to bear well its loneliness. She could not live without her kind. It were hard to mention any one of her acquaintances for whom she cared particularly; yet collectively they were the all in all. There was hardly a woman she liked, there certainly was not a man she loved—naturally not Markoff, surely not Gansevoort, while Van Kull had been a girlish fancy—yet she was tired of her husband, while Armitage was to her as if he did not exist. She grew petulant, intolerant of the hardships of camp life. She was tired, she said, of being dirty.

At the Grand Cañon, some New York newspapers that she found seemed to finish her. Mrs Gower at Newport was giving a dinner to the Duke of Grossminster; Jimmy de Witt, it was rumored, was getting a divorce. Mr Augustus Markoff had completed his marble cottage there and was preparing for a great housewarming, a cotillon dinner to end the season. The Duvals had opened their great place on the Hudson and were emphasizing Pussy de Witt's innocence by entertaining lavishly. Dorothy remembered

that Tony Duval and Pussy were brother and sister. The Einsteins were already on their Long Island demesne. But there were no letters; letters were only to meet them on their return, at Colorado Springs. The papers, though old and soiled by the hotel guests, were too fascinating to leave: she made pretext of a headache, and Austin rode down the cañon alone.

She had curtly told him, from her bedroom, that they must start for home next day. And for those twelve hours the man permitted himself the intoxication of his dream. Her presence was with him in the gulf of shimmering color, her voice in the rushing of the waters at its base, and, as he rode back at evening by the light of the stars, her eyes were in them, too. It was very late when he got back to the little hotel on the mighty chasm's brink; still he must go out upon its edge again; he could not bear to have that day come to its end. All below him was a shimmering mist, the riot of color paled to gray, the void below looking not so near as the opposite shore, lit light on its rim by the moonlight, fifteen miles across, and yet it looked to him as near—as near as Laurel Run.

XLVII

IT grew to midnight—one o'clock, two o'clock—then he went in and wrote his letter. It was a simple letter enough—any man might have written such to any woman. Like the majesty outside, the very vastness of a passion may bring tranquillity.

Yet there lay in his words some subtle suggestion of great joy. Mary Ravenel, reading it, could see that the man was happy. It was the first time he had written to her. The letter was about their travels; how Dorothy had borne it; a word or two of the grizzly, of Armitage, something on Western life and character, a paragraph of rapture about the Grand Cañon. It closed with a question or two—"Pray tell me how the boycott is getting on. When are you coming to New York?" He only permitted himself four pages. He folded it, enclosed it, sealed it, wrote the address, but as he did so, like any boy, he bent down to the little white square, and upon it, again and again, he kissed her name.

Well, no roof could be borne by him that night. Again he went out upon the cliff. The dawn was beginning. What did it matter?—she would never know—he would not lose the ecstasy of the night. His side of the chasm was in gray shadow, but the

Western cliffs already flame color. He no longer argued with himself, on his side of that more impassable gulf that separated them, that it was not love. But all love is one, he felt, inextricably blended, body, heart, and soul, in a triune root: the body even no other than the soul, the love of child, of wife—the love of *her*—no other than the love of God. He would not deny his Lord. There was, of course, no need for her to love him, too: that did not matter. By this time the sun had risen; its fire lit up even to the depths; below, far below the gray and scarlet rocks, the gorgeous-tinted clays, there swam in the still valley an isle of tender green. Such a still islet in the flood might be their hour of meeting.

He posted his letter there, at the Grand Cañon. He might have carried it with him, but he did not dare. Safe in the little mail pouch, it was beyond his reach; he could not destroy it, or rewrite it; it had passed into the hands of Fate.

Austin had no desire to stay there longer, and that afternoon they left. Armitage had separated from them the day before. They rode then through a forest of mighty *coniferæ*; now already these have passed through the pulp mill. They came to a Moqui village, curious, several-storied structures of adobe, where Dorothy bought Navajo blankets—it was such a pleasure, she said, to shop again! And then they

got upon the train. At Colorado Springs they found their letters and stayed several days—there are drives on the shoulder of the Continental backbone, on Cheyenne Mountain, whence, at sunset, you may see the shadow of the day sweep eastward, swifter than the wind, across leagues and hundreds of leagues of lowering, billowing prairie, until, in your imagination, you ride with it, to the mighty Mississippi, to the sea—you fancy the Appalachians as but foothills in the distance. Dorothy was fascinated to find, in the hotel, some New York people who, she felt sure, were getting a divorce. One of them she knew; another she knew by reputation, and the young man who was devoting himself to her, anticipating the event. She was in no hurry, now; she had received her mail, and in it the hoped-for Markoff invitation: the party took place early in December, and people were to return from the city and make a week of it. “In December,” wrote Markoff, “we can do what we like.” The invitation was not formal. She told Austin that she meant to go; and he was very angry. She only reiterated her resolve, adding that he need not come unless he liked.

But Austin also had had a letter—and it was from Miss Ravenel. Dorothy was never curious about her husband’s letters. He took it away, and read it alone. He counted the words—there were

four hundred and sixty-three; very soon, one may suspect, he had them all by heart. It was mostly about the boycott; something about her "social reconciliation" parties. They had been a greater success this second year. She had the Havilands, of course, and Freddy Wiston, and, of all men, Lucie Gower, and, among the women, Mrs Rastacq! Each class, she wrote, seemed to get on better with its opposite than with itself; her great ladies had been perfect with the young men, and the "gentlemen," technically so called, with the working women; but the corresponding classes would not mix. "I have most trouble of all with the college girls," she wrote, "from Vassar or the West—perhaps I have not been West far enough. The men we invited are of quite the same station as these girls' fathers; yet the girls try to emphasize every little social difference, when the whole spirit of our plan is to deny its reality! I had no idea there was so much good in Mrs Rastacq. Freddy and Mr Radnor have been splendid."

If Austin felt any heartburning that he had never been invited on these visits, it was in some way a balm that Miss Ravenel did not seem to think it needed explanation. "The watch situation is really terrible," she wrote. "The Trust not only refuses to sell to our poor Laurel Run people, but even threatens to boycott any dealer to whom they sell. Our last

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agents—in Baltimore, Washington, New York—have written me that they fear they must give up the agency. If so, the twenty-two families that lived on Laurel Run for near a hundred years must be ruined. They know no other trade. Do think of some way to help them.” And Austin swore to himself that he would. He resolved a plan even of going to Laurel Run—to inform himself directly—but no, he must not go to Laurel Run. She was still at Ravenel.

Before, however, he could consider this, he was occupied, on his return, by a greater piece of business. Mr Gresham was too old to undertake it, and Radnor had to be away. Markoff, it appeared, said Radnor, “nosing around, Jewlike, to find some stuff that people would buy,” had discovered, in London, a thirst for brewing properties. It was his Pandaric function to allay this thirst—and line his own pockets. New York was too big a field to tackle; but on coming back he had secured an option on the Springvale breweries, the largest in the East. The option was for \$10,000,000. The present owners took their price, part in bonds and part in cash. The preferred stock necessary for the balance was already sold in London. The common stock was retained by Markoff, and for other “founders’” shares. But the British investor, docile as a child

up to this point, insisted on careful inventories, descriptions, and the appraisement and certification by three expert brewers that the properties acquired were worth £2,000,000. Markoff, representing the vendors, could not act. Their client, the Miners' Bank, represented the purchasers; so they were called upon to fill the gap.

It happened that the business came to a head the very week before Markoff's housewarming. Great doings were to be had on that occasion; he had chartered a Sound steamer to bring his guests on from New York; also a comic-opera company; and they were to have a performance on the boat. There were only twoscore guests, equally divided between men and women; there were more than this number in the comic-opera company, but they were mostly girls. And Dorothy was perfectly determined to go on this way.

Austin went away to Springvale. His old law-school friend Wentworth now lived in that city, and Austin had put the preliminary matters in his hands. He had supposed it would be an easy enough affair to get the appraisement done, and hoped to return to New York the same evening. But he found the brewers of Springvale singularly shy. One was out of business, a second was "interested," a third plumply refused to act. A fourth was a competitor,

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but for that reason would not "spoil his rival's bargain." Austin thought this singularly high-minded. He spent his day in the vain search and then went back to Wentworth's office.

"It is being borne in upon me that the brewers of Springvale are a singularly modest or else a singularly honest lot of men," said he, as he threw himself wearily into a chair.

"I was coming to that same conclusion myself," laughed Wentworth. "You must telegraph Mark-off, and spend the night with me."

It was delightful to see old Wentworth again. Despite his peaceful life, Austin fancied that he looked older than himself; he certainly had more prominent pounds about the waist. He did not live in the city, but had a country place at a beautiful college town some ten miles off. "It is not as big as Harvard, but we think it does good work," said he. "And I want you to see our lovely country."

The country was lovely: and in the quadrangles of the old colleges it seemed indeed that one might live in peace. Below them, in the broad intervale, meandered the quiet river; two gently undulating mountains lay to the north; and on a grassy knoll the college buildings stood, venerable in their ivy and quiet crimson brick. Copied evidently from the parent Yale or Harvard, it seemed still dedicated to

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the early, simpler life. "Go out thenceforth in wisdom: for in her gates is peace."

Lovely, too, was Wentworth's wife; Austin had never seen her before, for Wentworth, when he was married—not so many years since—had been too modest to send him her portrait; and Austin (he felt ashamed to remember) had been too busy to leave New York for the wedding. He had sent, with his excuses, a Wyant picture, which now formed the principal ornament of Mrs Wentworth's parlor. It was distinctively her parlor; full of signs of a feminine presence, plentiful in flowers; Wentworth's library was in another wing "away from the racket of the children," three of whom came in to the early dinner, and did not seem to be so afraid of their father as this speech would indicate. The house was spacious and full of dignity; the gardens, Mrs Wentworth's special pride, he could even then see, would be lovely in the summer.

The two old friends sat up late at night, talking. Austin's heart was sore; Dorothy and he again had had an altercation, when he had left that morning, still about Markoff's party. She had even threatened him with divorce. The novelty of confidence, the sympathy of their boyhood's friendship, almost broke Austin down. He spoke quite frankly. He did not recognize divorce—no South Carolinian could—but

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he did not know that he could bear to go on. His old friend was deeply distressed; yet took it gravely, not seeking to minimize matters. This, indeed, would have closed poor Austin's lips at once. He told him of the summer, of his effort at reconciliation.

"I am sure you love her still," said Wentworth. "When she is older, her true self will return again. It is a pity you have no children."

Both men were silent some minutes. Then Wentworth spoke, in a low voice. "She was very lovely. Did you know, I loved her once?"

"You?"

"Forgive me, but that was why I would not go with you to New York."

Coming to Wentworth's office next morning, they found Markoff already sitting there, like a fat, black spider with his legs drawn under him. "What's all this nonsense?" said he.

Austin briefly recounted what had occurred.

"Of course you know this appraisalment is a mere formality."

"My instructions from London are to have it made."

Markoff took another tack. "A brewery is not to be appraised as so much land, so many coils of copper pipe. You remember what Dr Johnson said to the buyers at the auction of Mrs Thrale's brewery?"



“Like a fat, black spider with his legs drawn under him.”

They are crazy for the stock in London. They know well enough what they are buying—not a mere brewery—but ‘the potentiality of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice.’ ”

“I am willing to appraise it at that, if you like,” laughed Austin.

“You know what Englishmen are like—they must have a tin box full of flourished handwriting, tied up and sealed, with plenty of pink ribbon—if they get that, they don’t care how much they are swindled.”

“I know one man who may consent to serve,” said Wentworth, intervening. “He is the only brewer not taken into the Trust.”

“Well, go get him,” grunted Markoff, as he buried himself in the morning paper.

All that day Wentworth and Austin were engaged in fruitless search, coming back to the office, from time to time, to report; and all that day sat Markoff burying his nose in the New York papers, an expression of increasing disgust upon his countenance. He would look pityingly at his classmates when they entered, as one who sees a bungler who has missed his vocation. Finally he gave up even pity, but sat upon a stool, his short legs curled beneath him, the very image of utter boredom. Austin was amazed at his patience; but he thought of the

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Newport palace and reflected that that was the way his millions had been made. In the afternoon Wentworth reported that even the outside brewer had declined to serve. Markoff, however, took his name and address.

“Nothing remains but to cable for further instructions,” said Austin.

“Oh, well, wait till to-morrow.” They went back to New York in the train together. How could Austin refuse to dine with a man he was going to visit? And it was Markoff who told him that Dorothy had promised to come, definitely, by the boat. When they had had their altercation, it was already no open question. Of course, Austin decided to come, too. They dined at Delmonico’s. Markoff had become the man of fashion again; it was as if he had never heard of the Springvale breweries. But the day before the party, Gresham received a cable from London saying that the brewery affairs had been placed in the hands of another firm. And when, on the completion of the flotation, the issue was announced in the newspapers, Austin observed that the amount was now placed at twelve millions instead of ten; and first on the list of appraisers was the recalcitrant outside brewer. And a few months later his property also passed into the hands of the Trust.

XLVIII

THE opera on the boat was not so much of a success, perhaps, as the novelty of the imagination deserved. True, the after saloon was carefully curtained off from the rest of the steamer, the chorus girls screened from the scrutiny of grinning deck hands, the gallery hung with Turkey carpets; and trained footmen replaced the wonted darkies in attendance. In spite of all, the opera girls had a bad case of stage fright. The sea was perfectly calm; nevertheless the *prima donna* (French) chose to be seasick. The audience, small in number but brilliant in quality, did their best to reassure them; they sat very close and applauded enthusiastically. It had been a mooted question how to dress; low gowns seemed unusual on a steamboat; but it was finally decided that, the occasion being extraordinary, the dresses should be extraordinary too. So low gowns were worn; not indeed so low as were reserved for the grand occasion on the following night, but low enough to put the chorus girls in countenance. One pretty show girl in particular—she came of a respectable family in Detroit, and had sought New York fired with the ambition and romance of the stage, had there been promptly engaged by Saiman

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Lohmann, but had done nothing now for two years but wear abbreviated dresses—was encouraged by Mr Van Kull to be taken down in the *entr'acte* and introduced to the company. The combination of her shapely legs and Pussy de Witt's celebrated arms and neck was, as they stood side by side, most piquant. The chorus girl appeared the more modest of the two. Her one ambition was to get a speaking part and be allowed to resume her skirts, she said. But the play, as a play, dragged, and all were glad when it was bedtime. It was far too cold to go on deck, and the guests all went to their respective state-rooms.

The next night, however, it was different. Then the play was given on the stage at the end of the great ballroom; the elevated platform, the orchestra, separated the players from the greater folk; they were more in their element, while the brilliancy of the lights, the white and gold and crimson damask of the room, set off more effectively the really wonderful dresses. This time no chorus girl was allowed to mingle with the company; it seems that the night before had caused a jealousy behind the curtain almost amounting to a strike; moreover, it had come to Mrs de Witt's ears that some of the young unmarried girls had objected. Mrs de Witt was openly in charge of all the arrangements, frankly acting as

Markoff's hostess; but it was hardly believed that she meant to marry him. There were a few young girls asked, and it was commonly understood that Markoff meant to take his pick of these.

The probable composition of the party had been a subject of enthralling interest to the guests, among them Dorothy. Bets were made as to whether Markoff would persuade Mrs Gower, Mrs Rastacq, Pete Gansevoort. It was well understood to be Markoff's bold bid for entrance among the very holy of holies; he had a puissant champion in Pussy de Witt; on the other hand, Mrs Rastacq had never recognized him, and Pete Gansevoort was supposed to have blackballed him for the "Millionaires' Club." Then he could hardly avoid asking Mrs Malgam, for she, first of all New York, had allowed him to enter her house; but she never went anywhere now without Jimmy de Witt, and Markoff, of course, could not ask him to meet his wife, so there was a difficulty. Then he had himself thought Gansevoort and Dorothy rather an impossible combination, and there was another; and he wanted Dorothy. But at this Pussy only laughed aloud. It added spice, she said; moreover, it would be fun to see how Peter the Great would behave.

And then Pussy de Witt good naturedly told Dorothy that Gansevoort was coming. "You know, my dear, Markoff must have him; after all, he stands

at the head. Besides, any girl will go to a house where he is, and Markoff must have a few unmarried girls—really nice girls, I mean. The girl Gansevoort selects will be the admitted queen of American society—at least among the younger set—and perhaps our little Jew may catch her ‘runner up’ on the rebound!” Pussy de Witt did not pretend to have any illusions about Markoff; she was simply, as she would have said, “out for a good time”; and Dorothy had replied that she had not the least objection to meeting Mr Gansevoort. (Indeed, it was long since she had openly admitted to herself her regret. At that time she had not realized his grandeur. Austin had, in a way, taken advantage of her youth.)

But the bettors were all astounded at the party as ultimately made up. To begin with, Mrs Gower declined, intimating that it bored her to go to other people’s houses. But both Pete Gansevoort and Mamie Rastacq accepted. Altogether, the company was of the very best (Pussy told Dorothy); there were absolutely no poky, dingy people; everyone knew that a man like Markoff would have to be very particular whom he asked, and was anxious to come accordingly. No party is so smart as that given by an outsider. Dorothy had been rather nettled at Mrs de Witt’s assured confidence in her own acceptance. After all, she was but an attorney’s wife. It

did not make things better that she was still the prettiest woman there. Van Kull told her so, and, moreover, that even Gansevoort had said so, in the smoking room; Dorothy blushed with pleasure. But it was not a position, to be asked because she was pretty; Gansevoort's wife could afford to be plain!

Her position had been good; she had been received among them; but she had never taken part as one of the inner score before. Really, these were all people that would go to Gansevoort's own house, except Markoff himself, perhaps, and Mrs Malgam and themselves. Dorothy was intoxicated by the experience, and by its luxury.

For Markoff's palace was really the most perfect thing of its kind in America. Not too large, with every modern fancy and convenience, its fittings and tapestries, ceilings and *bibelots*, were of the best that the eighteenth century could do. The dinner, of twenty-four, had been splendid; the daring little operetta (the *prima donna* sang in French) an amusing respite; but the real night began after the ball-room was deserted, the band had gone, the singers and chorus girls packed in their special train to New York.

Out of Markoff's private library—which was furnished with a "ticker" giving the latest quotations and sporting news, a private wire to New York,

a pretty stenographer, and telegraph blanks—came the card room. If unfortunate at bridge you could go into the next room and recoup on stocks. Bridge was a new game then; but Dorothy had spent some weeks of preparation in earnest study. No play was allowed except for money; but the pretty stenographer, their host informed them, was a banker and would cash their checks. And Dorothy actually found herself at the table with Pete Gansevoort and Tony Duval, of the Jockey Club.

She had not maneuvered against this meeting. Yet it was no case, she felt, for maidenly reserve. She owed him—more than an apology. She had seized every occasion to edge toward his chair. Whenever Gansevoort looked up, he found her soft eyes fixed on his. Their expression was tragic, pathetic; she never ventured on a smile yet. But it was absolutely necessary to her life that all the Gansevoorts should be placated. She had got into the inner circle at last—where she realized their power.

Austin, on the other hand, avoided Mamie Rastacq. It was incredible to him that she had been at Ravenel—and the horror of that night at Lenox, years before, came back to him—a horror long forgotten; for he had, as it were, been shriven since. But only he knew that. And if she were to talk of

him, to speak of him, as she must have thought him then—to her——

But again he misconceived poor Mamie. She met him frankly on the marble terrace, the afternoon of their arrival, and put out her hand. "Haven't I been Christianlike?"—and when Austin, puzzled, looked at her: "Why, any woman can forgive the first kiss taken, but it takes a Christian to forgive the second, that was not taken!" There was not the faintest shadow in her laughing eyes. Nor yet was her laugh one of flirtation. "Come, if you like, we were both very wicked, only I warned you, I did it for fun."

Austin demurred.

"Oh, yes, I did it. I'd tell anyone I did it. You were not to blame. But now, I've come to be a friend. You know, I'm giving up this sort of thing. I've come only on your account. Well, your wife's, then." Her tone, still superficially light, had quite changed in manner. Austin still said nothing.

"You know, I've been her friend—perhaps her best friend in New York—except the Major."

"You know dear old Brandon, then?"

"Gervaise and I are old friends—he was a pal of—of Lionel Derwent's when I was a little girl. And you and Dorothy are nearer than children to him."

"I know," said Austin sadly.

"Do you play bridge? You must play to-night."

The play began, after supper and some dancing, about three in the morning. At the table with Austin were Mamie and Mrs Malgam, and Markoff himself. Sometimes Arthur Holyoke would come in, as a fifth hand; Baby Malgam was trying to make him jealous of Markoff. The odd man usually went out and smoked a cigar; cigarettes only were allowed in the room. But the odor of stale cigarettes, even on ladies' lips, is more sickening than that of cigar smoke; and Austin thought it blended horribly with the odor of great masses of roses that stood, in huge china vases, on every window sill. At five the men began to drink whisky and soda instead of champagne, and a few of the ladies to sip the latter. He rose, once and again, to go, but Mrs Rastacq would never let him. "Stay, stay; you are no quitter——"

Poor Austin was *écœuré*—positively heartsick with it all. His wife was at the next table, a gleam in her eyes that even he had never seen; he saw her light a cigarette, and twice she came and asked him for money. She was at Petrus Gansevoort's table, and what—what now—could he do? Mrs Malgam, his own *vis-à-vis*, lighted one cigarette with another

and studied the score intently ; she would allow no one to keep it but herself. Early in the morning Austin even thought her affected by the champagne she had taken.

The scene, to him, was a horrible one. The bare, underlying nature of these women seemed exposed ; only Mamie Rastacq (who nevertheless would not go) looked still like a lady and bore herself as if above it all. Indeed, they had a word about it together. "We are mostly common stuff—it is the time to see what a woman really is. The veneer of refinement doesn't wear—through the night. The cynics know it—look at Kill Van Kull. Look at that young girl, reaching out. After all, her complexion can stand it." It was true, but there were dark rings under her eyes. The girl was studying the score. Mamie went on :

"It makes one feel that there's no difference between us and the chorus girls or washerwomen. You men stand it better—but you are trained to be gentlemen, even in your vices. Look, is that the dawn?"

It certainly was, and footmen were called to shut it out. A dozen of them came in and did their work deftly, respectfully, looking carefully away from the gentlemen and ladies. Two or three of the former were plainly drunk. Baby Malgam was in real distress ; beads of perspiration were on her forehead ;

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she had lost a thousand dollars; the blood had retreated from her white skin and left two patches of rouge exposed; her gown slipped on one shoulder as she dealt the cards; she did not readjust it until the deal was over.

Suddenly the folding doors were thrown open, and there came in a flood of winter sunshine from the snow beyond the terraces. The women fled with shrieks. "It is eight o'clock," said Mrs de Witt, "and time to go to bed." The men laughed and remained to calculate the scores. Austin followed his wife to her room. His own was at the other end of the building—men together, women together—on every door was a little card.

"Dorothy, I can't stand this; I'm going away," said Austin.

Dorothy compressed her lips to a pale line. "Oh, why did you ever marry me?" She spoke only petulantly. "Why don't you get a divorce?" She threw herself down on the bed without undressing, careless, apparently, even of crushing her delicate dress. He made a motion to kneel at her side; she rang the electric bell by the bed, and he checked himself.

"You do not know what you are saying—" He spoke in stifled tones.

"I know very well—if you don't like me or my friends you have only to go away. Here comes the

maid. "Unlace me, Mélanie—" The last words were spoken to the servant, but in quite the same indifferent tone. But Austin saw that red spots had now come in her cheeks, making less visible the dark rings under the eyes; as he looked, she buried her face in the pillow, either to avoid him or to help Mélanie, who now, imperturbably, began cutting the lacing at the back of her gown! "Oh, go away!" she said again.

Austin turned without another word and left her.

XLIX

BELATED members of the house party were still coming up the stairs as he came down the corridor, although the sun was now streaming broadly through all the windows. The young girls were the last to come up, and with them, of course, their titular chaperon, Mamie Rastacq. "They say there is snow enough for sleighing," he heard one of them say. "He can't have expected it——"

"There are sleighs in the stable, I know," said Killian Van Kull. "Won't you come? Come now—just before breakfast." But Mamie was driving her brood along like a hen her chickens.

"In a ball dress, indeed! Trot along, girls—it's

nearly church time. Good night, Mr Van Kull." The young girl who had spoken of the snow now cast a glance over her shoulder, which Van Kull's practised eye was waiting to receive: then he retreated toward the billiard room. There was a noise of closing doors and skurrying maids. As if at a signal the footmen had all disappeared; not a male thing was visible; a score of dainty-ribboned abigails, looking as if fresh from sleep, were cleaning, dusting, carrying away the evidences of the night's pleasure. The other men did not seem to have taken pains to escort their wives upstairs, and Austin, left alone in the ladies' wing, was yet detained a moment by Mamie as he passed hurriedly by.

"What's the matter, Mr Pinckney? Was the bridge too much for you—or aren't you a good loser? You look—well, worse than any of us, Baby always barred——"

He made some murmur of dissent; she stood with her hand on the door knob of her room, looking at him intently, not roguishly; she spoke as one of two between whom all nonsense had disappeared.

"Meet me on the terrace at church time—perhaps you'll take me there——"

"I am not going to church," said Austin. "I am going back to New York."

"Then you must certainly see me first. I have

something to say to you. Order a sleigh and take me sleighing. I'll meet you in half an hour. Anyhow, you know, there's no train back to-day. I'll run and tell Dorothy we are going."

Austin was not in a position to refuse such an invitation from Mrs Rastacq. Nor, on the whole, was there anyone he would rather see. Somehow he felt that Mamie was the best physician for his case; and of her kindness he was now assured. He therefore promised to meet her as soon as he could and hurried to his room, where he plunged at once into the coldest bath the man could draw, then called for coffee and ordered his sleigh. Quick as he was, he found Mamie, fresh and rosy and swathed in snugly fitting furs, walking on the terrace waiting for him.

"And now," said she, "what's the matter? I'll be a mother confessor—better still, a sister to you. You know, I was in love with you once. Perhaps I would be still—only since then I've experienced——"

"Religion, perhaps? Or found me out?" The man spoke bitterly.

"No, not religion. And I've found— But you must talk of yourself. And you can tell me all the truth. They say, the greatest happiness of being with the woman that you love is that you can speak all the truth to her. And why not, then, with the woman who loves you?"

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But Austin did not hear the challenge. Her other words had struck him like a shot. It was true—and he had been longing, longing for speech with Mary Ravenel, to-day, this day, for just that reason: to her, alone, could he show the truth.

Mamie seemed wondrously amused. “How many men would I dare say that to? Get in. No, when I said I had experienced—a change of heart— But, get in, then! Are you all here?”

“Get in,” meant into the sleigh—a scarlet new cutter, behind a horse two men were holding. Austin got in and gathered up the reins, and Mrs Rastacq had to arrange herself in the furs. Then she said, “Did you ever meet Mary Ravenel?”

The horse bounded furiously off, the groom wondering at the unnecessary cut of the whip. But Austin, now, at least, was all there. He sat very tight and fixed his eyes upon the horse’s ears. “Oh, yes,” he said, “I know her.”

“I have been staying with her this summer. We worked together all last winter. I wish Dorothy could see more of her.”

“I know her very slightly,” said Austin. He had a letter from Miss Ravenel in his pocket.

“It was really on Dorothy’s account you spoke as you did, last night—this morning at my room, I mean—was it not?”

“I can’t abide the place—I can’t endure the life. Dorothy may stay, if she wishes—I won’t.”

“When I wanted to add to the evil of the world, I thought the world was all evil,” said Mrs Rastacq simply. “It is better to find the good in it. After all, do you never work in places that are worse than this? Your work lies here just now.”

Austin fingered at the letter in his breast. It told him of the suffering at Laurel Run. Then he thought of Nauchester; of the world of labor in New York; of those—already so far off!—bright free days in the Rocky Mountains. “I see no worse place than this. I may have seen worse people. But even they were trying—might be made to try—to be better.”

“I am trying to be better,” Mamie simply answered. “And Dorothy might be made to try——”

“And Markoff? Gansevoort? Van Kull?”

“I give you our host. As for poor old Kill, we don’t want him any better—for the same reason the reformer made an exception of hell: ‘it would spoil the place.’ But do you think you had better leave Dorothy alone with Gansevoort?”

“My wife has placed herself in an impossible situation coming under the same roof with Gansevoort,” the man icily replied. There was a set to his teeth that even Mamie had learned to know; it

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was only Dorothy who could seem unconscious of it. But (so the Major would have explained it) she had seen Austin swayed by his desire of her—and that is a mastery a woman never forgets she has had. “There is a night boat, and I must be in New York to-morrow,” Austin concluded.

“I shall have Markoff ask Major Brandon in your place. And Mr Pinckney—don’t decide too hastily—women often need protection against themselves. Remember, you men had your liberty since society began—it’s new to us— I only came on her account. Your way should be her way——”

“You talk like the Major himself,” laughed Austin. “If my wife is too silly not to walk in the tents of Kedar, I am too proud to make her walk in leash. She says she wants a divorce. Well, she can get one, in Rhode Island, for desertion. Will a Monday to Saturday do? Or must it run over Sunday? You know, we are not strong on divorce in South Carolina. I’ve seen a great lady from New York invited to leave a Charleston ball with her new husband. Anyhow, I go to-night.”

Very gently Mamie answered. They had a long drive, and he found her curiously changed. What wonder was it—the poor man bitterly thought—what wonder was it that was wrought by the soul of this young girl on all she met? What radiance of

hers so transmuted into light all souls with whom she came in contact? Here with this woman—this worldly, spoiled woman—with all the women in her classes, in the factory—with them it could not be her face. Yet with him—ah, God, that he might see her face again! It was nearing a year since he had seen it last. Strange, that he could not take her face with him wherever he went! Her soul was in his, but her face was dim already in his memory. And he had her letter in his pocket. Should he go? The sleigh was dashing furiously through a now unbroken road.

“Must you go?” Austin came back with a start. Go, whither? Oh, New York. He did not know how long he had been dreaming. They say one can dream a lifetime on the edge of awakening. One cannot live a life on the edge of dreaming——

“I want to go. I only came to give my wife countenance—I would not have her seem alone under that man’s roof. But, Mrs Rastacq, you are very kind—she will listen to you——”

“I’ll look after her,” said Mamie promptly. “It is only till Friday.” “Petrus Gansevoort is a stupid man; he will not dare”—her thought went on.

Austin hardly saw his wife again before he left. They were far separated at luncheon; he did not seek

her in the afternoon; on the whole, after her words, he did not choose to explain that he was going. He said a word of business in New York to Markoff; and of course that gentleman recognized this excuse, though, for the moment, his own business lay here.

Incidentally, he had meant to flirt with Austin's wife. The girls were slow in coming. It was true, hitherto, she had had her eyes only for Gansevoort, and he was evidently dazzled by them.

Markoff had counted on her coming, as his guest, this woman whom he once had kissed—to make her helpless in his hands. He had understood her better than her husband, he thought. And, after all, this would do almost as well. To such as Markoff, not to spurn is to consent. Vanity and revenge were more to Markoff than any woman. He had never forgotten the personal repulsion she had let him see, in Cambridge, five years back. Which was to be the road of her humiliation did not matter. And he must not compromise himself, if he meant to marry one of these young girls. He would let her go to Gansevoort.

L

THE letter had come that morning, written from the Havilands', addressed to his office. It was a simple note, asking him to come and see her and say what could be done; the works at Laurel Run were closed. He had hardly read the letter when it came; his one desire had been to get alone, and this first happened in his stateroom on the boat. There he read slowly over the little note, then folded it to his heart. The long year had gone by and he might see her now, on the morrow. His very soul was bathed in the glory of that coming light.

But with the dawn there came upon the man a sense—immutable, essential, not to be argued with—a sense like that sense of direction that bids a bird or bee the straight way home—a sense that he should not seek her now.

Perhaps, thrown off his guard in his own desperation, he had, in his very yielding to it, discovered the strength of his affection. There was no blinding himself—there might, alas! if now they came together, be no blinding her—that, though in very truth he adored her, worshiped her as an angel from heaven—he loved her also as a woman dwelling on the earth. No law of God or man should avail to

stop his saying to himself that he loved her. And as he would not walk before her path in hypocrisy, he would not walk her path. So he kissed again her name upon the letter, and then—after his coffee in his own house—he wrote to her that he could only judge of Laurel Run affairs upon the spot and was on his way to Ravenel. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see—” The time might come when he might see her, but it was not yet.

In Maryland, Pinckney found himself once more in the Indian summer. The country was red and brown; a blue haze was in the atmosphere; the air one breathed was softly pungent with the smoke of burning vines. Somehow the beauty of the land came over him with a new intoxication; as he grew older, he found himself more sensible than ever of nature’s charm, only, unhappily, to see it he must be alone. There was a melancholy in the day; but it was a melancholy so full, so tremulous with feeling, so sweetly speechful of the norms of life and death, and change which is no change, and the peace which abides, that it made in his heart a stirring undistinguishable from joy.

To his surprise he found a carriage, with the old white-haired servitor that was butler, major-domo, and man of all work for old Mrs Warfield, and even (it may be suspected) fed the one fat horse that was

still kept for the traffic of the manor house. "Mis' Warfield am expectin' you, Mas'r Pinckney," he said; "Miss Mary done telegraph."

Austin had planned to put up at Köllner's, if he found it necessary to stay the night, but this message bore no refusal. The ancient negro treated him as an old family friend, and this, he found, was the footing on which Mrs Warfield awaited him; nothing is so subtle as the divination of one's social standing in the family by its old retainers. The place was quite unchanged. The gardens were still beautiful, but luxuriant, evidently getting beyond Miss Ravel's control; Austin had time for a walk in but one of them before dinner. In New England, the hardiest of gardens, left untended, in a few years dies. It would seem as if in that Puritan air flowers were not wanted; the hard blind weeds and the dwellers of the wood return; yet there are flowers in the wild wood, too. But Massachusetts is full of such lost places, gardens overgrown, abandoned tofts, where there is nothing now but some gnarled apple tree or unwonted garden blooms to show where once was human life and love. Austin knew how much this garden was a part of the young girl's life, and he rejoiced to think that it had long to live in that gentle air; possibly, some day ere long, there would be another to tend it with her—and her children after her——

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It was strange that, coming in, as he took his seat opposite the old lady, she herself chose this theme for their talk. She began by saying that she regretted he had not come while Miss Ravenel was there. Mary had had, on the whole, a very successful summer, but had worked too hard. Her house parties had really seemed to justify their plan—but perhaps she bored him, talking so always about her granddaughter? (God, to talk of her again—as if his whole acquaintance of the recent years had not been chosen among those who, by some happy chance, might speak to him of Mary Ravenel—she little knew, perhaps, how much he heard about her.) There was Freddy Wiston, for instance (Austin's consciousness emerged, as if from a diving bell); it was no breach of confidence to tell how much he was in love with Mary—she would not listen to him. Yet he had the sweetest nature, and his millions, surely, were no objection—there would be little enough when her pension ended. “You know, Mr Pinckney, she will have literally no relations—Basil Conynghame is a recluse—there are one or two far-off Warfield cousins, whom she never sees, and the Ravenels are extinct. As for Mr Breese, she must have nothing to do with that side of the house— You know Miss Aylwin?—of course you do, she's in your office—well, she has told me things about Miles Breese—fortunately that

Pittsburg woman will look after him, and now that he owes his daughter money, he's not likely to trouble her. A very pretty girl is your Miss Aylwin—how much refinement she has for one in her station of life—Köllner, at the works, is desperately in love with her.”

“Why doesn't she marry him?” said Austin. It was easier to ask the question about Miss Aylwin than about Miss Ravenel.

The old lady shrugged her shoulders. “I don't know what's got into the girls nowadays. In the old times we were like to marry a dozen times before we were twenty. Whether the men are inferior—or the girls don't fall in love— We had no trouble falling in love.” And the old lady laughed with a sparkle in her eye that made one wish to have been born earlier. “Some of the girls at the works have married—and married men that they met through Mary's parties. But I tell her, what's the use of keeping a matrimonial bureau if she won't be her own customer?”

“I thought her object was rather to refine the men, to elevate the one sex by the other.”

Mrs Warfield sniffed Voltairean. “Refinement and marriage are the same thing for any man. And a girl ought to fall in love by nature—that's what they're made for, not to alter the face of the world

—the first thing they'll alter will be themselves, I'll hazard—and the last.”

Austin could not but reflect how identical her philosophy was with the Major's.

“She says the New York men are only money-making machines. And the foreigners at Washington she despises. Yet they know how to please a woman. In my youth, we turned out American gentlemen who knew this, too. Where have they all gone to?”

Köllner came in after dinner. He gave a pitiable account of the conditions at Laurel Run. They must certainly give up the business, he said. But the Watchmakers' Trust would only offer half what it would have given a year since. And what would become of the people of Laurel Run? For the works would certainly be abandoned; and they owned their own farms and homes, and had done so these hundred years. They would have to be sold, as farms, for what they would bring, and the young ladies (Köllner always said “young ladies”) take work in the Philadelphia factories. One or two had been married the past year; they were the more fortunate.

“How are the works owned?” asked Austin.

“Ownedt?” Köllner looked as if he hardly understood. “Why, the people own them.”

“But you must have some stock company?—

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some organization?—certificates of stock to show how much each one owns?”

Köllner shook his head. “There wass no needt. Of course, the people who built the works, an hundred years ago, they ownedt them, and now it is their children and their grandchildren. What needt is there of certificates? Everyone knows who they are which owns the Laurel Run.”

“But if one of the founders—one of the people who built the works a hundred years ago—had only one son and another had six, of course they would have only a sixth part of the only son’s share——”

“I do not see,” said Köllner. “Every headt of a family has a full share like every other—of course they all work—it is only of the profits that I speak: all the women and the men are also paidt their wages for what they work——”

Austin turned to Mrs Warfield with a laugh. “That is true coöperation! Only, I should think it might unduly encourage large families. Mrs Warfield, can you keep me for a day or two longer? I must have a friend down to see us here—and, don’t be alarmed, he is a walking delegate!”

But Mrs Warfield had not the faintest idea what a walking delegate might be. She only said that any friend of Mr Pinckney would be welcome; and Austin, who had not at first thought of having him in-

vited to the house, suddenly saw the wisdom of it, and only added that she must not expect a gentleman. Hugh Michael was but an educated mechanic. At which the bright old lady only bridled a bit, seeming to think that anyone was a gentleman who was invited to stay at Ravenel. Fritz Köllner volunteered to ride to the station with a telegram to Michael from Austin; and our hero, who had promised himself a lonely cigar in the garden, found himself *tête-à-tête* with Mrs Warfield, who insisted on his having his cigar with her. Austin consented, and with no bad grace; but this time she did not talk of her granddaughter, and he stood too much in awe of her penetration to so much as mention her name; indeed her name was always what he could least trust himself to speak. But the lively old lady showed herself perfectly charming; she remembered even to the War of 1812 and was full of that human history of the Republic that is not told in the books—the social misadventures of Andrew Jackson and his womankind, the successes of the bachelor Van Buren, the visit of Lafayette. Lafayette had arrived at Ravenel exhausted from his Western trip, with only breath enough left to say, “They are all good peop’s, ver’ good peop’s, but I am ver’ tired!” At one o’clock in the morning the lively old lady showed not the slightest disposition to go to bed, and Austin, albeit

doubtful of the etiquette of the same, had to make the move himself——

Again he was under her roof. *Hora quæ non sperabitur*— The day that he had thought would never come had come again—he might even have seen her that very day, had he so chosen. Through his open windows came the warm scent of the box in the garden; her own room must be just along in the wing beyond; and, though she was no longer here, the whole place imaged in his heart her presence. He was in her earthly mansion, he could walk in her paths, tend her flowers, read her books, touch what she had touched. And it seemed to the man, again, in some strange way, that his soul became as hers, even to the loss of personal identity; it *was* no other thing than hers—and hers had its part in the Divine. Love speaks not always grammar nor holds its exaltation blasphemous.

Of course he was out walking at the dawn. He sought out every path he fancied her feet had trod—again he climbed the Laurel Run, a deeper purple to-day than he had seen it those years before, for long since, the frost had come. He had not to shut his eyes to see her slender figure gliding through the beech and birch, hardly even to see the glory of her gentle face again now turned to his. He should write to her to-day. Alas! what could he say? His poor cold

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note, thanking her for her thoughtful telegram and Mrs Warfield's hospitality, saying that he must stay down a day or two until Hugh Michael should come—this was last written, only as the very sun rimmed the eastern plain—for first Charles Austin had written the letter that he would write to Mary had God shaped this world to meet their mortal ends. All his heart's blood went into this, all the pent-up fire within his prison bars, the passion of a man, the adoration of a poet, the love of a hero—a score of closely written pages that left his heart a waste, his pulses calm, his soul as if shriven by the confession—and then (such follies will strong men do), closed carefully and sealed, the other letter was mailed, and this one he took up and buried—buried in the crevice of a precipice above the rock where she had sat that day. Only Goethe, Shakespeare, Dante, have recorded such a folly——

Köllner was waiting for him at the mill.

LI

WHEN Austin had explained to Mrs Warfield what a walking delegate was, she had promptly visualized a conception of Mr Michael based upon the comic newspapers. Short hair, a stout neck

with creases, and a stout paunch without, a large check suit, a silk hat, and a blazing scarfpin were perhaps its leading features. Judge, then, of the gentle lady's surprise when she found herself led into dinner by a pale young scholar whose black frock coat and narrow tie made him seem rather like a preacher than an agitator. "My interest in this case is extra-professional, you might even call it academic," he said to Austin. Then, turning to Mrs Warfield: "I am delegate of the Machinists' Union. But Mr Pinckney stands so high with all of us that anything he suggests—then, too, we all know and admire Miss Ravenel——"

"What does Mr Pinckney suggest?" interrupted the old lady.

Michael looked at Austin and smiled.

"I suggest a sympathetic strike," said Austin.

"I thought as much. And here you have been lecturing us for two years that they are all wrong," said the agitator.

"Hugh Michael, beware of the academic. All great constitutional bodies have their war powers. I need hardly point out that this is war. They began it."

Michael nodded in unison to Austin's periods with a smile. "All quite true. At least, I have heard others say as much."

"Not me, I suppose. Well," laughed Austin, "I despise a hidebound consistency."

"And there ye're on broad human ground where the Celt and Saxon can always meet."

"And I don't propose the Watch Trust shall wipe out the homes of Laurel Run. In fact, if Mrs Warfield will forgive me for saying so, I'm damned if they shall!"

"Forgive you? I'll make it a toast. Take some champagne, Mr Michael—some champagne, Fritz. Here's to your being—I think you said?—'damned if they shall.' " And the old lady's eyes danced with fun.

"Besides, you know," Austin went on, "it won't come to a strike. The whole Laurel Run output is but a fleabite to them. The merest threat will be enough."

"The threat must be heeled, all the same. You lend me one or two of the women—and Fritz here (Michael had already got to calling Köllner Fritz) and we'll have a little deputation to New York. Will you come back with me to-morrow? No brass bands—only moral suasion."

Köllner colored with pleasure. "But you should first see the works; you should study the conditions——"

"Oh, I've got the conditions all right—still, we'll

take to-morrow morning at the works and get up by the evening train——”

That night Austin indulged himself in another letter, to tell Miss Ravenel what they had done. The missive bore no one of his buried words. The next morning was spent in the factory and among the homes of the watch people; and Michael and Fritz collected two others to serve with Fritz on their committee—one an older woman, left a widow with three children, who had returned, to support them, to her old employment at the works; the other a fair German girl with eyes like a gentian and braids of hair like ripe corn. Poor Köllner was in obvious excitement; as they neared the great city it increased; he was continually moistening his parched lips; Michael attributed it to the coming ordeal before the Watchmakers' Union, but Austin knew better. All three were safely housed in a model lodging house recommended by Miss Ravenel (how did they hear of it? Well, Austin had had a letter from her), and Austin, resisting a strong temptation to be their escort to the theatre, hurried with Michael to an evening meeting of the union. There, with Michael's help, the matter was easily arranged; “only,” he said, “it can't be for to-morrow. You must go through the form of a mass meeting. And Fritz and Gretchen and Mrs Lochmann must be introduced to their fel-

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low-members of the union. All now depends on their help."

"Haven't they got to be elected first?"

"Well, I wasn't quite so casual as you seemed to think. I took a signed charter down with me in my pocket, and organized a branch union at Laurel Run that morning while you were out to walk—Köllner is president, and Gretchen secretary. We're Organized Labor all right!"

Austin invited Köllner to meet him at the office in the morning, and told him what car to take to get to Wall Street. "And if I'm not there just go into the library and wait. Miss Aylwin will give you the morning paper." Poor Austin wondered if he himself blushed like that whenever the name of Miss Ravenel was mentioned—he had long since dropped the effort to have secrets with his own heart. But coming down he found poor Fritz roaming disconsolately in the outer office, and Miss Aylwin deeply absorbed in her Remington.

He gave himself the afternoon, to show to Köllner the Bowery clubs, and then sent them all for a drive in Central Park. He had wanted to ask Miss Aylwin, but his courage had failed him. He proposed himself to the Havilands' for dinner, but no else was there. They talked over poor Köllner's case. Yes, there was a social difference, John admitted; but she

had been too acutely conscious of it. "She keeps me at a stern distance," laughed Austin, "but Köllner she ignores. Who are the Watch Trust's attorneys?"

"Well, you know the Watch Trust is a very secret thing—probably at the Albany capitol they would deny its existence. The Geneva Company, the largest manufacturers, floated an issue of bonds last year—it seemed unnecessarily large, even for them. Auerbach's firm placed the securities. Possibly, if they heard something to their disadvantage, your friend Markoff might turn up——"

"Where is Miss Ravenel? I have just come from her place," Austin explained.

"Oh, she would go back to her lodgings. It must be dreary enough, poor child, though little more so, I suppose, since the old man bolted. Isn't that a good picture of her? Grace made her have one taken. Excuse me a moment; I hear her calling——"

Austin looked at the soft carbon plate; it showed Miss Ravenel in a simple white frock, standing, with eyes looking clearly ahead and a little upward, as if at something that had suddenly attracted her attention; but the artist had done full justice to the wonderful purity of her lips and eyes, the sweet, strong brow, the gentleness of her pose. And he would have given his earthly possessions to take it with him. He

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dropped it hastily as Gracie entered; he had more fear of her than of John.

That night the *Sun* announced “exclusively” the coming of a strike which would paralyze the watch trade. Since the depression caused by the era of bicycles, it was said, wages had never been restored to their old level; but throughout the returning prosperity the discontent had been growing and was now about to culminate. Then there was an “Interview with Hugh Michael. The President of the Machinists’ Union Talks.” But Austin observed that he said nothing about the Laurel Run Watch Company. At the mass meeting held that evening, to which Austin gladly sacrificed a millionaires’ dinner, the delegates from Ravenel were introduced as “exponents of the conditions there—now out of work through modern methods.” Köllner made an embarrassed address; Mrs Lochmann spoke simply and impressively; but the enthusiasm of the evening rose to a climax when Gretchen came forward to sing a simple German folk song—so un-selfconsciously she did it. Then the resourceful Michael had a stereopticon, and already photographs of the homes at Laurel Run, a group of all the factory girls, and a view or two of the valley were thrown upon the screen. Hugh Michael himself said something about the general wages and condition of the watch busi-

ness: "And here you have just what we are all striving for—a condition of happy individual homes—owned by the workingmen—the necessary power brought to the door of each—the plant owned by the very workmen that have created it—and just because it is so perfect, because it is a living example of the success of coöperation, *and because it will not join the Trust*, the Money Power has sought to destroy it." Then Austin himself was put forward as the intelligent friend to labor—"well known to be with them when they were right, against them when they were wrong"—and it was somehow understood that he, Michael, and Köllner were appointed a committee with full powers, and the meeting adjourned.

The next morning Austin was not surprised to receive a visit from Mr Markoff. "I came," said he, "about this ridiculous watch business, though I don't see what you have to do with it."

"The Laurel Run Association own their own business and works. It is a client of mine. I have just been down there."

"Oh, that is why you left my house party," said Markoff. "I should not have supposed the business was important enough. Mrs Pinckney is still with me— However, I've got nothing to do with the Laurel Run people. I want to see the representatives of the Watchmakers' Union."

"Michael is in the next room. And Köllner, of Laurel Run, is in the library, as it happens— Miss Aylwin!" Austin had rung her bell. "I want you to take down what I have to say— But first, I wish you'd call Mr Köllner——"

"Stop, Austin—this little affair had best be settled just between ourselves—" Miss Aylwin paused irresolute. "I suppose you know that under the New York Code a threat of a strike, an intimidation to control another in the conduct of his business, to the prejudice of a third party, is a penal offense——"

"That is precisely why I want Miss Aylwin to take down what they say——"

"Perhaps you'll say it yourself," said Markoff.

Austin smiled. "Well, then—to begin with, it's not to the prejudice of a third party—it's for its benefit. The Watch Trust won't bill their goods to any firm that deals with Laurel Run."

"Admitting—which I don't admit—that there is a trust; and admitting—which I don't admit—that there is a boycott—one illegality doesn't cure another. And aren't you getting up a pretty big boycott yourself? Haven't I heard you say that a boycott is always illegal?"

"This isn't a boycott—only a strike," said Austin.

"Well, haven't you condemned sympathetic

strikes to those very labor agitators you now represent?"

"Any man or set of men has a right to combine to better their own condition. This is a strike—or will be, if it comes to that—of all the union watch-makers for higher wages."

"And I am to understand that it needn't come to that if the Trust will do business with Laurel Run? Haven't I heard you say that while any man may leave his work at any time, the concerted threat to do so may be unlawful?"

"I don't know about threats. They may strike, if they're not given higher wages."

"We are prepared to be reasonable on the wage question—if they will not paralyze the winter trade."

"If the Laurel Run people are treated fairly I am sure they will be reasonable." Austin rang for Michael and Fritz.

"The fact is, you fellows have got *carte blanche*," laughed Markoff. "Well, that's what I call altruism. I must refer that to Felix Adler! Of course, the Laurel Run concern is a mere fleabite to us. But promise me, if we take off the boycott, this wages business ceases?"

"I think Mr Michael can make no promise—that might be construed as a threat, you see."

"I see," laughed the amiable Markoff. "Well,

I'm going back to Newport. Must at least bid my guests good-by. Only next time, don't mount a twelve-inch gun to hit a sandpiper!"

"Your business is ended, Mr Köllner," said Austin to that puzzled young Dutchman, who looked at first as if it were too good to be true, and then, as at some second thought, his face fell again. "You can go back to-night. Or rather—perhaps there are some details to arrange—I suppose Mrs Lochmann can take Gretchen back? The works may start at once."

"Sure"—it was a rich guttural—"I have some supplies to purchase," the young man firmly added.

"Well, come in and see us every day."

A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind. But that night Austin, as after every accomplishment, felt cast down once more. Achievement was not fruition. Still, it was better than it had been; at least he had a heart in his work. So he went home and took up the matter of a ship that was lost at sea. Before doing so he wrote gently to Dorothy, begging her to come home. Meantime, Mary Ravenel was writing to him.

For she had, all unconsciously to herself, kept in touch with all that Austin was doing. Why should she not? Maidlike, she had persuaded herself that there need be, that there was, no emotional relation.

The years had gone by, and this had easily come about. Therefore she gave herself free rein to like him as a friend. And now he had been doing her a service—he had found time, with all the claims upon him, to do her this kindness. She had seen the settlement of the strike in the evening paper; it must have concerned Laurel Run; she was too anxious to wait to hear from Köllner or Mrs Warfield. She would write to him—why should she not?—and ask him to tell her. His letter had arrived only that morning—not a word in it that was not business.

Had she known the passionate joy her own note caused, she might, one fears, have hesitated. Austin had been hungering for her now nigh a year—starving for denial of her eyes. And surely, once a year was not too often? And now, at last, it came—“I am so anxious to hear what you have done,” she wrote. “Why will you not call for me, at Rivington Street, and we can walk uptown? Any day will do, before dark—” Any day was to-day.

But ah, what iron self-control the man imposed upon himself! True, he went very early—he meant to beg for an extension of their walk, to the park—he was careful not to tell the tale too rapidly. She was enthusiastic, happy—as she walked at his side—and, O merciful God, how he loved her! And yet, when his eyes met hers, they dared reveal the inmost cham-

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bers of his soul, for there dwelt no wrong in it; and it was hers, if she willed, to know the truth. A man bares all the truth to the woman he truly loves. And yet, perhaps—I do not know—it was the very simplicity of Austin's manner deceived her—or did it? At all events, the purest maiden may hold a truth at arm's length; a man not so. Yet they were so happy at being together that they should have known.

The joy of that gray day seemed to blazon back through many months of Austin's life; it lightened many months ahead. She spoke no more of Dorothy to him; when she referred to his own life there was a tinge of something like compassion. But she led him out to talk freely of himself. She had consented to the park ramble; but the early winter sunset came so soon!

“So it's all happily settled—” she had said.

“All happily settled—but do you know, Miss Ravenel—I wonder if you ever have that feeling—I mean, what next? What is the next thing to do?”

“I do not think I should, if I were a man—There is politics, for instance. You know they want to get Mr Haviland to run for mayor? Why don't you take public office? You have seen what a trust is— If you were Attorney-General——”

“I might accomplish something,” laughed Austin.
“Well, I'd rather take the stump for John.”

But that day had to last him many years. He labored on at what they gave him; not able himself to choose his work in the world. What is there great enough for a man to serve who may not serve his love? But Mary felt that she had brought him and his wife together, for a time—and then had failed. And now she thought of him alone.

Meantime John Haviland had been elected Mayor of New York. And Austin Pinckney was the District Attorney. He left, said the newspapers, a lucrative practice to take the place. So Dorothy had upbraided him for it. But it seemed that Dorothy had lost her influence upon his life.

LII

IT was late one summer, in the Columbian Club; no time to be there, and the Major was undeniably out of temper. He had been attending a meeting of the Governing Committee, where he had been one of three (all retired from business) to blackball Mr Augustus Markoff; and he had arrived so in the nick of time and acted with such decision that his colleagues had laughingly charged him with having returned from Europe for the purpose. Even this virtuous act had not restored to the Major his wonted serenity.

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And his grounds for this personal bitterness remained exasperatingly general. When reproached with having visited Markoff only two or three years before, he merely intimated that that was precisely when and where he had obtained that knowledge of Markoff's character which gave him his indubitable conviction that that gentleman was not qualified, by use or custom or previous condition of gentility, to become a member of the Columbian Club.

What made it the more of a shock was that Markoff had been proposed by no less a person than Petrus Gansevoort. Only an oddly assorted pair had been found to fly at the house of Gansevoort and join Brandon in his dissent—Mr John Haviland and Mr Killian Van Kull. The latter merely asserted that he was too (languidly) damnable a cad, in a voice that had a plaintive dying fall. Yet his gentle blue eyes met the Major's with a look that betrayed a mutual understanding. It was suspected that they had both been witnesses of something at that very Newport house party, which had otherwise so assured Markoff's social position. As for John, he had his business reasons; moreover, he preferred in his favorite club to meet Americans. And now he and the Major and Van Kull were left alone while Gansevoort was digesting the affront, after hotly telling Van Kull there wasn't a decent room in Christendom that he

(Van Kull) ought to have a look into—to which that unruffled gentleman replied merely with the suggestion of a “cooler.” Gansevoort then had turned upon his heel. And the conversation, somehow, turned to Dorothy. And the Major related to Van Kull how the marriage had been brought about.

“Whoever would have thought she would ‘pull’ in double harness?” said he, as he ended. “She looked as simple as— But I always feared Pinckney would forget, it’s the ring finger carries the curb.”

“If she’ll only carry through to forty, she may settle down,” said Killian.

The Major shook his head. “She hasn’t a noble note in her register—and he *would* make her his divinity. She was a nice enough little girl—with a look of race—a small head is a great beauty, in women or horses. She was a pretty thing, many a man might have idolized her; he idealized her. Women know their place; we should have kept them there. She might have been the favorite in a harem——”

“Oh, come,” laughed John. “She’s not so bad as that.”

“The virtue of a woman and of an egg admits of no degrees,” sententiously replied the Major. “The moment she steps out of her shrine, she is lost—to a man like Pinckney. Oh, I know ’em all—from Eve to Mary.”

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"A man may know 'em all and not know any-one," said the lady-killer.

"You had better say, from Ashtaroth to Helen," Haviland interposed. "I'll admit there's not much range between those two."

"Well, she's in their class—" growled Brandon.

"I'm not so sure," rejoined the professional. "If it were her sister, now—" But he checked himself. "Pinckney's a good fellow." And he took his leave.

"I thought the boy would have changed everything," then said John.

"He has, for Austin—I think the baby seems to her an—an anachronism," said the Major, feeling for a word. "I know she was very much astounded. Mrs Rastacq told me so, when she discovered it, at Newport—I think Mamie before that had been afraid something was going to happen—she telegraphed me to come—the only thing that happened was to see this Markoff get set down—I wasn't needed. Gad, it was well done, though!" and the Major chuckled.

"What are you to do in these duelless days?" mused Haviland. "It would be ridiculous to challenge a Markoff."

"He might be clever enough to accept it—it would improve his social standing. What would you

do, Austin?" The Major spoke quite placidly, but Haviland started as the younger man came up behind them. He felt ashamed that they had been discussing his wife.

"Do when?" said Pinckney. He was grayer than when we saw him last, just after that autumn in the Rockies. And Haviland now was Mayor of New York. John went on, speaking more freely as Killian walked away.

"When—I don't speak in my official capacity—a fellow like Markoff, for instance, makes himself too personally obnoxious—compromises a young lady, or persecutes a woman in whom you take an interest——"

"Not speaking in my official capacity as District Attorney—I think I should shoot him."

"But suppose he won't stand for it? You can't assassinate him. Or suppose the young lady took his side? It would do no good to kick him——"

"A slap in the face, though, administered with discreet publicity——" suggested the Major.

"No publicity would be necessary," said Austin quietly. "Duels made manners, but they didn't create right and wrong. A man in the wrong is always a coward. But he needs——"

"A good knockdown blow?"

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"I should fell him like an ox," said Austin gravely.

"What a thing it is to hail from South Carolina—and have no sense of humor," chuckled Brandon. "Egad, I believe he means it."

"I certainly do," said Austin.

"All we Northerners can do is to blackball him," laughed John.

"Oh, I wasn't thinking of Markoff," said the Major. And Austin wondered who he meant.

"Well," said Haviland, as he rose, "I must go. I have a sadder errand. I am going down to Maryland. Old Mrs Warfield is dead."

Pinckney made no motion, but all color left his face. The Major took up the talking.

"Yes, I know, Miss Ravenel's grandmother. The poor girl's left quite destitute, I fear."

"Not entirely," said John. "She has a little trust fund. Of course, she must give up Ravenel. Good-by to you."

"Good-by," said the Major.

"Good-by," said Austin Pinckney.

"Have some brandy and soda with me," said the Major when the other had left. Austin not answering, he poured it out himself. Austin drained the tumbler. Then there was a silence. The September twilight came on and the servants came to light the

room; they were still in the club committee room, where Austin had found the Major; he waved the servants away.

“Brandon, I must go to Ravenel.”

“Your wife?”

“My wife will be away—she is going to-morrow to Gansevoort’s house party.”

The Major let his glass crash to the floor.

“Your wife—” He spoke slowly. “You let her go to Petrus Gansevoort’s?”

“I can do nothing. You know I cannot prevent it.”

“Then you can go there too.”

“I will not go to that man’s house.”

The Major knew when it was useless to press a case. He responded only with a long silence. And then it was with a change of venue.

“My boy, do not make me your father confessor—but do you think you can do her any good—at Ravenel?”

Austin did not look back at the Major, as he walked away. And the Major sat there alone in the gathering twilight. Austin, coming into the street, felt his steps reel; then he sought his home, like any wounded animal its hole.

The reader has been told—possibly too plainly—that his had been a marriage of desire—and not of

the moth for the star. With all his intellect, he had never seen this for himself—only, in the shock of the first morning after, for one moment he had felt, not thought it—then Nature, in her normal purity, Nature, which is our polite term for God, had wound her green ivies around the scarred places of his soul, sown her balm of blossoms where the ruins crumbled into mold——

But to the Major, sitting there to-night, it had all become too plain. “God!” he muttered to himself, “they might have come together and parted like any wedding of the street corner for any effect it had on her—they might have lived a week together and a few years later Dorothy would have forgotten him had she met him in the street—not so, alas! the man. Had they so met, so parted, she had been the same in a week, in a day. It had been but a marriage of the senses, with her at least; with him at the worst had been some glamour of knight-errantry—” And he, the Major, old man of the world, had grasped at it for the ideal of romance he still had dreamed despite his world’s denial. “If only Gansevoort had been better looking!”

Yet all that night, in Austin’s breast, the struggle went on. And only with the sunrise came his decision—that the Major was right. He had not undressed; but now he got into morning clothes and

went out to post the letter he had written. He would go to Gansevoort's. Meantime Dorothy was busy with her ball dresses.

LIII

ALL the year Mrs Warfield's health had been failing. She had not insisted on Mary's staying in New York, so she had given up her classes and stayed with her grandmother all winter. It had been very severe; for almost the first time in their records the snow so banked up the avenue that access to the railway was difficult. She spent much of the time reading aloud to her grandmother. The faithful Freddy wrote to her, Gracie Haviland often, and now Mrs Rastacq. From Austin she heard not a word. He was hard at work at politics, devoted to his child; his wife, Mamie wrote, had resumed her place in the world of fashion.

With the coming of the hot weather her grandmother grew weaker. There was no question of any house parties now. She could hardly have a girl come to stay as her companion. Miss Brevier came, for a part of June; Miss Aylwin for her two weeks' vacation in August. Of her father she had heard nothing since his marriage.

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She occupied herself, as was her wont, among the people of the countryside. She took much comfort in the Laurel Run colony, and in their gratitude; the factory now was running happily again; much of her time was spent there; poor Fritz, alone, was very melancholy. Too well aware that it was her last year at Ravenel, she took all the old walks for the last time; up through the gorge, to all the summits of the Laurel mountains, through the pastures, by the mills. Her heart seemed sensitized to every picture.

Querulously, sometimes, the old lady would now speak of Mr Wiston, of other men she heard of. Mary could only shake her head. "I fear I am not a woman who is likely to marry." It was all she would say. Who can say what is in a young girl's heart? A woman's, now, it kept its secrets, even from herself. Certainly, she would have liked to hear from Austin, from all her friends.

She tried bravely not to feel that she was lonely. But here she had so little work to do! After all, it was best, perhaps, that the life at Ravenel should end. The old lawyer, from Baltimore, came out one afternoon to make Mrs Warfield's will. She had little to leave, said the old lady, but she did not propose that Miles Breese should get any of the family portraits. The place would have to be sold as a simple farm. One would suppose, sighed old lady Warfield,

with its beauty, its tradition, its famous gardens, trees, it would be just the place for some new-made millionaire. But they had other uses for their money. "Perhaps," laughed Mary, "they fear that I go with the place." Neither one made any secret of the elder's coming end; she herself was weary of the world, the granddaughter not living in it.

"Sometimes," said the old lady, "I think you are living in a dream." And then, she might add to herself, "Better so, than like her mother." But Mary was living in no dream. On the contrary, she thought herself hard at work in the world. She had never seen the man she liked so much as Austin Pinckney, that was all. To her, marriage was the holiest of sacraments. Until it came to her as such, she would wait. She neither despaired nor repined. A shallower nature might have sought a convent. Half Catholic as she was, she did not care for convents. She had things yet to do in the world. Her service was perfect freedom.

She knew that she had been of use—to many a poor young girl, perhaps even to a more difficult spirit, to Miss Aylwin, to Mrs Rastacq; a little, alas! to Dorothy; even as it might please God, to Austin Pinckney. All was well, with him and her, she fancied, now. But she would not think much about herself. When her grandmother was through with her,

she would take a book into the garden and come in, at the sunset, with a face that had looked on visions. Then old lady Warfield would look at her through narrowed eyes. "She is the most beautiful girl in the world," she would mutter to herself. "That I should be alone to see it!"

But old lady Warfield was not alone to see it. Austin had thought so for half a lustrum, and once he had trembled and grown hot and cold lest it should be seen of other men. He had long ceased thinking of this now; it was not her beauty that mattered. Marion Rastacq thought so, but then she loved Mary Ravenel as she loved nothing else in the world. Nobly she strove to make her marry. Perhaps her beauty was not of the sort that attracts young men. Then, she had no money; and the modern New York man is well under the glamour of wealth, has learned the lesson to "go where money is." But even as she gave herself these reasons, Mamie would laugh at them. There were still brave hearts enough, not subdued to money-making, to beat for such as Mary Ravenel. Mamie—ten years older—would look at Mary's eyes with a dumb worship that would have been funny had it not been true. They still had their wonderful shadowy blue of a mountain lake, now deep azure as it is ruffled by the wind, now shifting to pale sapphire as it sleeps at dawn, or even to the dove

color of a sky overcast. Mamie, too, could study her face—which Austin never could—although to him the pure pale brow was as the hope of heaven. She was taller than Mamie, and as they walked home side by side would fend aside the branches in the wood path. “They are getting sadly overgrown,” she said. To the old negro, watching them from the garden with his rake, they seemed to close about her as she vanished in the shadow.

This was on a day in Mamie’s visit, and that night, very quietly, the old lady died. Mamie stayed on several days; the Havilands came down for the funeral; Major Brandon sent a kindly letter; something in it changed Mamie’s plans, and she returned with the Havilands, promising to come back again after keeping one necessary engagement. “I like Major Brandon,” Mary had answered. She never queried her friends’ motives. Miss Ravenel had also a letter from Mr Pinckney, but of this she did not speak.

When they were gone, Mary set herself in good earnest to dismantle the house. No time for weakness now. The pictures were taken down and packed, the furniture for the most part given away; but the books were more of a problem. It is dreary work, looking over dusty old books. It is dreary work, sitting in an autumn garret.

In the midst of it the equinoctial storm began.

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The crisp leaves rattled along the garden flags, the rain descended; Mary had to stay indoors. No matter, it was just the day to work in the library. And she was glad that she was alone.

One can get very tired reading the backs of old books; perhaps a little sad if one opens them. It is better not to look at the flyleaves. Hours passed, and Miss Ravenel still sat there. Now and then she would read a little, but the old bookplates could not but remind her of the hopes of those long dead. They all bore Ravenel or Warfield arms; an early copy of Walter Scott had underneath it, proudly written, "Guy Ravenel, Commodore, U. S. N.," with a sketch of the then new flag, the stars in a circle. Here, too, were some books of her dead brother's—"Miles Breese, Jr."—and the Gaelic motto of the Welsh *ap Rhys*, who, emigrating, had changed their patronymic to the English Breese. Here now was another book of older fashion—a quaint old copy of Ossian. She took it down; it had no bookplate. Suddenly she started with surprise. On the flyleaf, in a man's hand, was written, "Mary Ravenel Warfield, from Charles Austin Pinckney, Newport, August, 1843."

As she read the signature the door opened—she had but time to put the book hastily down beside her as the old porter announced with his simplest dignity, "Mr Pinckney, miss."

And pale and storm beaten, Austin strode into the room.

LIV

WHEN the thought first occurred to Dorothy that it was not too late for her to marry Petrus Gansevoort, it had been at Markoff's house, three years before. There was much of what the Major would have called the eternal feminine about Dorothy; of the woman whose nature it is to turn to the strongest, or, failing in that, the richest, lord. She was very impressionable by the splendor of wealth; very sensitive to what she considered social position and the adulation it evokes in others. Up to the morning after that card party she had formulated no plan; her speech about divorce to Austin had been but a *cri de cœur* born of the consciousness of her regret. She had been brooding over it for days. How blind she had been! Austin had just happened to be there. He had taken advantage of her youth, her inexperience. How much more logical, to her mature mind, it now appeared, to have married the duke (for Gansevoort was quite the equal of an English duke) even at the risk of some day taking Austin for a lover. She would not have minded being unfaithful to Pete Gansevoort, but somehow, even now,

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she could not bear to be untrue to Austin. Of course, a divorce would be different. That would be no dishonor; and they might part friends. Yet why had she ever married him! Silly girl, she had cared for Austin's looks—as if looks mattered in a man. So Dorothy began to eat her heart out, as a Satan's penitent.

Then, to her horror, she had become conscious of the baby. It stopped everything. She had never much cared for children; she certainly did not want one now. Austin's happiness almost exasperated her. It was too silly. One thing, she must see no more of Gansevoort at present. Of course, a divorce would now be ridiculous. And then, Markoff had presumed to make love to her again—for the third time, she remembered. True, she had had to encourage him on the second occasion, but this time it was in his own house and Gansevoort was present. So she had now had to snub him, and that in Gansevoort's presence, for a private snub to Markoff did no good. True, Van Kull had assisted her, but it was all very unpleasant. This was on that very Sunday evening when Austin had gone away. It had made her longer stay at Markoff's house impossible, and on the Tuesday morning she had left. With Major Brandon she had come back to New York—to find Austin absent at Laurel Run, the office told her. For Markoff had

quietly lied to Austin about it; he wished to see on what terms this married couple stood. It was a way of finding out that she did not write to him. And Dorothy did not know or care where Laurel Run might be.

Gansevoort had followed her. That was the only encouraging thing about it. But she would not see him, in her present condition. She would hibernate. He called at the house in vain. So she had awaited Austin's return; and, Austin more than willing, they had taken a house at Asheville for that winter. There in the following May the baby had been born. John Haviland was his godfather, and Armitage had sent a cup!

The early part of the next summer had been spent near Paris. Then, in August, with her mother and sister, she had returned to Newport. Daisy's husband had been pensioned off, and she now enjoyed the title unencumbered. She was a perfectly good marchioness; and, that summer at Newport, only the Countess of Birmingham ranked higher. A marquise is higher than an earldom, but somehow Kitty Birmingham took precedence; to be sure, she was a licensed beauty. There were no American duchesses as yet. The following winter they all spent abroad; all, of course, except Austin. And then for a second summer they had come to Newport again. They had

now been married seven years, and she was not yet twenty-five.

Austin had not thought wise to oppose Dorothy in her plan of the Paris visits, though he refused to send the baby twice across the Atlantic. His aunt Austin welcomed them both, and even the two nurses, in the Lenox house. Then, when his wife returned each year, they had joined her and Mrs Somers in Newport. Dorothy always brought back a trunkful of baby clothes from Paris, and Daisy was fond of playing with the infant. Dorothy did not see why Austin was so changed. It made her nervous about herself, until Killian reassured her. Markoff, too, was more attentive than ever. She was glad of that, he entertained so much these years. After all, his offense had not been of a nature to cause Dorothy to bear malice; particularly as it raised her in Gansevoort's estimation. And at Markoff's house she always met Gansevoort. She could bewitch him still—she was sure of that. Even his vanity had been overcome. For, in the autumn of this third year, had come the invitation to the great house party at Gansevoort manor. And she had simply told her husband her resolve to go. She had expected his refusal, but she had hoped for threats. She would have liked him to strike her. He was too blameless for this world.

Well, if he would not get a divorce, she would.

He was, she fancied, exceptionally moral; but, in Dakota, desertion would do. She did not dare consult Markoff; but she thought it could be made out desertion when he let her go alone to Paris. It was well, though, that she had come back when she did. Other women were after Gansevoort, she could see that. Petrus Gansevoort, at forty, was all that was desirable—matrimonially. It was easy enough for her to get them away. Unmarried girls could not venture where she might go; and there was not a married one that stood a chance with her. For with her Gansevoort had really been—was still, she saw—in love.

Markoff, she feared, saw through her plan. Would he help or hinder? He might want—Dorothy did not so phrase it—his little commission. She was sorry that she had been so rude to him. Taking a favor, he might be trusted to lie about it; and he did not want to marry her. She knew he was to be of the house party. Who else? The Austrian ambassador, Kitty Birmingham, she heard; and, to her surprise, Mamie Rastacq. There were to be no unmarried girls; that was encouraging. Evidently, the party was got up for her! The game was in her own hands.

Then, to her dismay, Austin came home and said that he was coming too. She had only stopped at the

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New York house to change her wardrobe and this had happened; Austin was supposed to be in Lenox. There was nothing to be said; he had already telegraphed his change of plan. (“D——d impudence,” growled Gansevoort when he got the dispatch. Why couldn’t he bastille the husband, as the Louis’s did—in the French memoirs he was most familiar with? Gansevoort had never read Thackeray; but he felt himself quite as above “the attorney” as any Marquis of Steyne. It was rather a pity he had not read his Thackeray, by the way. He ought to have known something of Rawdon Crawley!)

Dorothy, however, merely contented herself with saying that she did not like to leave the baby alone; to which Austin replied that the nurse was trustworthy. Austin had been nurse to the boy those last three summers. So they went up, with Mrs Rastacq and the English countess, in Gansevoort’s private car; Markoff was expected, but to Austin’s relief he sent an explanatory telegram that the car might not wait; the only other people were the Jimmy de Witts and a dago prince. The present Mrs de Witt, that is, “Baby” Thomas *geboren*, sometime Mrs Ten Eyck and sometime Mrs Malgam; after Pussy de Witt’s divorce she had climbed into her place, and patronized Dorothy most insufferably. The world had been surprised at Jimmy’s marrying her; hardly more so than

that gentleman himself. Dorothy sat next Prince Castiglione, while Austin, finding that the countess was New York born, tried to talk to her; but his mind was elsewhere, Dorothy could see, and she wondered why he had come. She tried to reflect whether it would make any difference—to Gansevoort, that is. On the one hand, it might irritate him—incite him—though the triumph was now so stale, the husband might touch his vanity. But secretly she doubted Gansevoort's courage—well, she would have to be the bolder.

They had dinner on the car—unexceptionally cooked and served—such things were more real to her as she grew older. De Witt took too much wine, at which the abstemious Italian looked puzzled; he devoted himself to Mrs Rastacq, while Dorothy talked with Baby, so that, de Witt incapacitated, the handsome countess was left for her husband. He seemed to like her, and Dorothy felt glad of it; he was so insensible to other women! For Dorothys, once ladies of a good man's heart, most tranquilly assume their ladyship eternal. It would be a comfort, indeed, to have him take things more easily. And Dorothy had tried, and tried in vain, to do, in her thoughts, injustice to her husband. But the countess might occupy him, at all events; and Dorothy, when they arrived at midnight, was careful not to ask Austin for his help,

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but accompanied the de Witts and Prince Castiglione into the first carriage, leaving Austin to squire the two great ladies in the second. The maids came after, in an omnibus.

Dorothy was first from the carriage, leaving Mrs de Witt to help her own husband; she sprang lightly up the great marble steps and gave Mr Gansevoort just the chance he wanted to press her hand and say a particular word in her ear. It was a hope and a regret, and she accepted both serenely. Then he turned to the others and apologized for not meeting them at the train. "We were still at dinner, and my mother would not hear of it." That portentous lady appeared to confirm his statement, and Dorothy, for the first time in ten years, met her. She had been afraid of her before, and she was more afraid now. It was evident, too, from the stately chill of her greeting, that she was an unwelcome guest. And Dorothy bit her lip and resolved, now, that she would marry him.

Mrs Gansevoort led the countess to the drawing-room, where the guests already arrived scanned the newcomers, still in their traveling clothes, with the usual latent hostility that a house party shows to new arrivals. The others could bear their gaze with equanimity; Dorothy felt self-conscious. She wished now there had been a young girl or two, if only as

a screen. But she felt relieved when she saw their rooms. It was evident that their host had had his way there. The apartment dedicated to the countess was not finer.

The days, for Dorothy, went by on wings. Yet she made rapid progress. Even Markoff stood aside. Here, at last, was the *milieu* she belonged in. She felt that she was born to be mistress of this great house; how could she ever have doubted it? Petrus Gansevoort evidently thought so too. She never looked at him that she did not meet his eager eyes. He put her next him at dinner as often (he told her) as he dared. On the rides or drives—he preferred driving—she was always his companion. She felt sure of herself. Everyone saw it. They left him to her. Only Mrs Rastacq sometimes interfered.

She did not encourage him, she did more; she excited him. When he ventured on flirtation, she drew back with a sigh. Then he would become lyrical. Still, the days went by. Gansevoort's mind was un-inventive. It was a case for a woman's contrivance.

So it came to the last evening of their visit. The others were safely occupied at bridge. She permitted Gansevoort to lure her to the terrace. It was a warm September evening, and the moonlight made it almost as light as day. She was determined it should happen now. He did not seem to know where to begin. An

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hour passed, and Mamie Rastacq came by and saw them. Dorothy feared she would stay; but, for once, she had the tact to leave them alone. At last he took her hand, and this time she did not repel him. But her delicate fingers lay passively in his clumsy ones. At last she complained of the cold and sent him for a wrap.

She hastily reflected what to do. A curious recollection came over her of that old day with Austin. Only, she had a doubt if she could be moved to tears—or this man be moved by them. She walked to a darker place, above the great marble steps, under the glass roof. As she heard him following her she stood erect; lifting her arms to the pillar, above her head, she leaned a burning face upon them; the man approached stealthily and drew the lace about her shoulders, about her neck—her hot cheeks felt his fingers, then his lips. She called him by his first name. He sought her lips——

“Darling, you must not—till we are married—” But on the word his lips met hers and crushed them.

When she disengaged herself, there was a silence. The man had been trembling; he was now panting. Finally, she had to speak.

“When I get my divorce——”

Gansevoort started. Then he sought to clasp her in his arms again. She shrank from him still.

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“When I have come back from Dakota.”

“Dearest, who wants you to go to Dakota? Don’t let me lose these precious moments— When your husband goes back to-morrow——”

Dorothy had a quick sense that her surrender had placed her at a disadvantage. “When we are married——”

“Kiss me again.” Clumsily he sought to silence her. The phrasing stung her pride; she drew back haughtily. “You are insulting!”

“Well,” said Gansevoort, abashed— Then he saw that she was crying, and it emboldened him. “Well, who spoke of marriage? I wanted to marry you once— Now I am not a marrying man——”

The horror of the rebuff made the poor girl faint. Again he leaned over her. Helplessly she sank to a chair, and he tried to draw her to him—just as Austin appeared; Mamie Rastacq, behind him, vanishing back in the doorway.

There was no explanation—Gansevoort had but time to rise to his feet when a blow sent his heavy body crashing down the marble steps. The sound attracted footmen from the vestibule. Austin bade them pick their master up and led his wife into the house. And then, in the anteroom, the first room on their way to the bridge party, they found poor Mamie fainting on the floor. As Dorothy bent down to help her, she

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shrieked; she seemed to be hysterical. Puzzled, Austin looked about him; the servants were all on the terrace below. Mamie shrieked again. But, as Dorothy bent over her with smelling salts, she whispered, calmly enough, "Have they taken him away?"

"He is not much hurt," said Pinckney, looking out. "He is walking." Whereupon Mamie gave another violent cry. Sounds were heard from the card room.

"Tell the people I have had a fainting fit, and a fall," she whispered hurriedly. "You must take me home, to my own house, I mean."

At last her cries attracted the other guests, who came running out, Markoff the first. Mrs Rastacq had now become very weak. Austin had to explain the situation. "My heart," was all poor Mamie could say, pressing her hand to that organ.

"Where is Mr Gansevoort?" asked Markoff.

"He is gone—to the village—for a doctor," said Mamie between her gasps. And with much sympathy and tender handling the fair lady was conveyed upstairs. She preferred, she said, to see the medical man in her own room. Meantime, she would have only Dorothy attend her. So she was left with her, the others hovering outside. "Send for your maid and have her pack your things," she then found a chance to say. "You must both come home with me. The

doctor will say it is a serious illness, and I must be in my own house. Call your husband first."

Still tearful, Dorothy complied. She was glad of the chance to speak to Austin; so far, she had not dared.

"Mr Pinckney," said Mamie when they both came in, "I saw it all. The man is a brute, and I want you to know your wife was not to blame. But you must of course come away with me."

Austin only bowed in silence. But coming out, he saw that the women had gone to bed and the men to the billiard room. In the hall he met the head footman; it was he that had picked his master up. Austin pressed a large bank note in his hand.

"Tell Mr Gansevoort to drive to the village for a doctor," said he. "We are going by the early train."

The man bowed respectfully.

In two hours they were out of the house.

LV

IT would have seemed a strange relation that found these three together, but that a man in the world gets over considering strange relations. The English, say the French, have a horror of defined situa-

tions ; if so, it is a feminine trait in them ; for women, good and evil, the best perhaps the most, shrink from defining them. But to Mrs Rastacq, after all, it was a situation that concerned only the others ; the only embarrassment was conversational. Dorothy was probably beyond the stage of embarrassment ; her silence betokened a new humility. And Austin, to Mrs Rastacq's surprise, it may be admitted, was the least self-conscious of the three. So it was entirely without embarrassment that he found himself in the attitude of employing Mamie in the capacity of spiritual trained nurse to his wife.

Austin had not seen all that happened ; he had only seen enough to infer Gansevoort the aggressor ; but such aggression implies provocation. Naturally he had overheard nothing of the conversation, nor would he have condescended to do so had the opportunity offered. Mamie was perhaps less chivalrous and better informed ; but she loyally reiterated the view that Pinckney naturally accepted. Dorothy's thoughts may not yet be formulated. Mrs Rastacq had to keep up the conversation.

The sun rose even as they were driving through Gansevoort's splendid park. Not content with the old domain of the manor he had expropriated the tenants of some thousands of acres, which his ancestors had been content to let as farming land, and

handed it over to his foresters and landscape gardeners; enabled easily to bear the expense of thus laying waste a hundred farms by the increment of rental of some dozens of the blocks he owned in New York City. Dorothy had marveled at the splendor of it the day before; to-day she looked at the valleys and hills, the blazing shrubbery and scarlet woods, with dulled eyes, color blind. Austin appeared to be quite indifferent to his surroundings. Even Mrs Rastacq did not think it in good taste to admire them.

On the train, it was better; they found, in the Pullman, an empty compartment and had coffee. Austin had sternly refused to order any refreshment at Gansevoort Manor. But Mamie had ordered something in her own room and called in Dorothy to share it. Her interview with the doctor had been private. Doctors have to tell many lies.

Austin had breathed a sigh of relief as they drove under Gansevoort's great gates; before them was the railway station, the open road; he had just had time to telegraph Miss Austin; then, after their coffee, he had found an empty compartment, and smoked and watched the pleasant country rolling by. It may already be doubted whether Petrus Gansevoort was uppermost in his mind.

Then, at noon, they came to Albany and had to change into a local train. There Mrs Rastacq wrote

a long telegram to Mrs Gansevoort; the old lady, fortunately, had been safely in bed at the time; Mamie bade Austin send it and asked him to read it as he did so. "Am bearing the journey, but shall not be able to write for some days." And at her own station, where her carriage met them, Austin got an answer to his telegram to his aunt. "Baby very well, of course send Dorothy up at once." He showed it to Mrs Rastacq. Mamie said that she thought Dorothy had better be a few days with her. Antoine, fortunately, was off yachting.

Dorothy was taken to her room and given tea, and her maid left in charge; then Mamie went to Austin downstairs. She found him still in his overcoat, his portmanteau at the front door. "I have ventured to detain your coachman," he said. "I must go on to New York to-night."

Mamie looked at him, ready to demur; his attitude was not demurrable. She was rather afraid of him. Then, in her quick mind, she reflected; anything was better than an *éclaircissement*. "Well," she said, "I will take care of Dorothy."

"She ought to go to Lenox as soon as possible."

"You know," said Mamie demurely, "I must get well first. But as soon as the doctor will let me travel. I could take her over in the new machine. It has just

come from Paris and Antoine says will travel thirty miles an hour. Where shall you be?"

"I shall stay about New York for a few days——"

"You know, I don't think you are likely to hear from Mr Gansevoort——"

"Well, I shall be at the office."

"And then come up to Lenox?"

"Perhaps." Again Mamie Rastacq looked at Austin and again decided it was best to give him time.

But to Austin, speeding in the warm sunset down the river bank, the events of the week might have been the events of ten years before. He had gone through with it; and now it was over. He was no longer anxious about his wife. Another care lay deeper at his heart, an anxiety to which no step of his own could bring relief. And it was this anxiety that now recurred. His hands were bound. She might be suffering and he could not help her, starving and he could not succor her, perishing and he could not save. Worse than all, she might be in sorrow—and he might not even know it. He had written his one letter; that was all he might do. It was now three years since he had spoken to her; it might be longer still ere he saw her again. He crushed the evening paper in his hand; then set himself to read the news.

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Coming to New York, he asked for the Havilands; they were away. He went to his club: not even the Major was there. None of her friends were there, not even Radnor; Gresham never left home at night. He might go to the Piccadilly and find Wiston; but Freddy Wiston was the one person of all of whom Austin dared not ask about Mary Ravenel. And once more his inability to aid, his exclusion from her very presence, came over his heart as with the weight of guilt. Then, furiously, the man would rebel; what had he done, what had any true thing wrought, that he of all the beings upon earth should be denied a place at her side? Then he went over every word Brandon had said, that she was very poor, that she must earn her living. God! What place could she take? Miss Aylwin earned her living well enough, but she could not do Miss Aylwin's work. Restlessly he turned upon his bed. He would speak to Miss Aylwin in the morning. No, he could not speak to Miss Aylwin. He would write to her again. No; what could he say? He would confide in John Haviland. No, that would cut off the one rarely trodden path that still led from his way to hers. Oh, God help her!—and God bless her—and, at dawn, he slept.

He made no pretense of writing to Dorothy, but was at his old office early. Yes, Miss Aylwin was

there, but she was leaving that very day. He tried in vain to frame a question to the girl, for he knew she corresponded with her; he might better ask even of Gresham, who had her affairs in charge. He knew her Baltimore lawyer; but if he wrote to him he would be almost sure to reply to Gresham. He wondered who was at Ravenel with her; there must surely be some one; but it was not Miss Aylwin, nor Mamie, nor (for he called on her to see) Miss Brevier. But there, at Miss Brevier's, he was rewarded by the blessing of hearing, at last, her name. She said to him that Miss Ravenel was still at her home in Maryland, not very well, she thought. And so another night went by.

Not very well? If she were ill, might he not write to her again? He would ask Mr Gresham now. That gentleman had not heard of her being ill. Oh, as to her situation, she had the income of the Allegheny stock, of course. Then the place ought to sell for something above the mortgages. Austin made pretext of some further business to account for his call. He was now District Attorney of New York; of course his name no longer appeared in the firm, though he meant to rejoin them when his term was over; and on the way out he stopped for a word with Miss Aylwin. It was a Friday, and he telephoned his official office; there was nothing to be done there;

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the assistants were amply able to care for the few cases that came up, the *quo warrantos*, the routine, the preparation of evidence; it was the first of October, and most of the courts were in vacation.

That forty-eight hours in New York City had seemed interminable; yet what should he do? They were but the first of a myriad such hours. He would not go back to Mrs Rastacq's; next week, he might go to Lenox, but not now. O God, if only one look, one sign, might go from him to her!

He was back at their empty house. He could not stay there. He must "arise and go"—go somewhere, if not for peace, at least for refuge. He bethought himself of a shooting club near Hatteras, still likely to be untenanted at that season; and bidding the man servant pack his guns, contented himself with throwing in clothes and a few books. They were some of his father's books, that his sisters, rather than divide, had, not long since, come to the conclusion should all be his.

Again twenty-four hours on the rail. The autumn was coming on, the day the first of those that are dull and cheerless; as they rolled through Maryland a rain began; he would not look out of the windows, and he had nothing to read; he could be interested in no book, and newspapers seemed trivial. At Washington, in the morning, he sent some tele-

grams; there the long journey began over again; the clayey roads, the squalid cabins of Virginia, the barren pine groves, the swamps, the canebrakes of North Carolina. Then there was a ten miles' drive with the old negro, in the wagon; Austin was conscious that he spoke to him of floats and dogs, but answered at haphazard. He had his dinner, and sat alone before the great pitch-pine fire; fortunately, there was no one else; why had he come? The notion of a day immovable, even in those lonely waters, became intolerable; he took the bundle of his father's books—odd forgotten volumes they seemed to be—"Aurora Leigh," a "Festus," an "Ossian"—books once alive with passion, now burned out—even to Victor Hugo's "Rayons." He chose the "Ossian," and opened it idly. The inscription on the fly leaf attracted his attention—it was in a feminine handwriting, a name that stilled his heart—"Mary Ravenel Warfield." Below there was a faint penciling in a strong hand that he recognized as his father's, "July 20, 1843." And then the surge of his emotions flooded his heart, and his will was drowned——

The storm was increasing at dawn, as the puzzled negro drove him back through the canebrakes. In his agony lest he might miss the north-bound train, they had started early—for he had not been to bed

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—and now it was reported late, and he had some hours to pace the deserted platform. The pulse of destiny still shook the foundations of the world. But he knew that he would be a slave no longer—the will that had willed this thing to happen had now another will to deal with—nor should the stream of Fate swallow up his heart without a cry—nor now should all the powers of good avail to make him hide his self from hers. She should see his soul: it was then hers to save or cast aside; not all the reasoning of all the rabbis would now serve to show his heart it was its duty not to speak its love—the consequences were for her and God. This thing had so been willed; and the errand of his own life, be it eternal or be it but a span, was yet to be performed. God grant him but this one more day. When he had told——

No longer restless, no longer madly drifting, he had found tranquillity. He opened his “Ossian” again—he had devoured it in the night—only to find that he knew the poor tinkling thing by heart—yet a refrain would ring in his memory—there was something simple, elemental—some echo of a crying heart—and it was splendidly out of doors!

“I will sit on the top of the hill of winds—

But morning rose in the east; the blue waters rolled in
light;

Fingal bade his sails arise—”

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The bits that were true he had taken; the rest he threw away. "Aurora Leigh"—he was impatient of "Aurora Leigh"—"Festus" was sophomoric. Yet some one had loved it once. One thousand eight hundred and forty-three—his father had been hardly twenty-five! He, Austin, to-day was nearly forty—and she was thirty. After all, what did the poem matter? His eyes had softened over the Florentine:

"Questi, che mai da me non fia diviso—"

the simpler fifties had hardly understood it—over Jacobo Lentino and his lady in heaven:

"I have it in my heart to serve God, so
That into Paradise I shall repair—
Without my lady I were loth to go—"

Mr Philip James Bailey of the Middle Temple, barrister at law, had thought it blasphemous. Yet there had been no one—no one surely since the Italians—who had loved as he did now. Austin wondered if his father had ever cared for Mary's mother. Then he found himself wondering when, with him, it had first begun—there was time enough to wonder, that long day. Had it not *always* been? Had not his heart done its homage, unconsciously, even before his meeting with her? Had he not been almost ship-

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wrecked that it had lost faith in her existence? He had only known it that first day at Laurel Run—but it had been, long before. His eyes had first seen her on that evening when his soul was being drowned—that very day her eyes had saved him—but it was really from that rainy day at John's, he thought. Then, it began. He now knew that, since then, he had thought of her always. Her face had been with him in the loneliness of the desert, in the loneliness of crowds; the strong spirit of the morning was hers, and the sadness of the sunset, and the wakeful watches of the night. How often her eyes had made a shining through his dreams! and he would wake, with a cry that she was going from him to be seen no more; and as he lay awake at the dawn all laws of God or man would be as cobwebs to his sorrow and the power of it freezing in his heart.

This was the ultimate nature of his being; to follow her—as drop of water blends in drop of water, as frost rends rock. Let him then follow out his law as other creatures of the gods do theirs; as gravitation has no conscience, should he be weaker than a drop of water, a soulless molecule, because he was conscious and a man?

And if he were God's creature? Well, the sin, if sin there should be, would be his. Oh, he would pay. Better his own damnation than the regret in

heaven that he had not told— He would pay. As to sin, it had got beyond the point of mattering— Of one great duty he had felt released— Of treason, dishonor, his conscience felt no guilt. Hurt her?— he would not hurt a hair of her head. But that was her affair; she would know the right; but she must know.

So these were all his thoughts—if they were thoughts; it was no day for thinking; nor did he read his books; he watched the gloomy cane fields in the rain. Never had he been so sure of himself, never so sure of what he should do. He did not have to think about it; he was, against all seeming, at peace with the world; his decision had the calmness of a process of nature. It was his day for action. But he did not even think this; he watched the slanting spears of sleet—

“come fiocche, large e distente,”

the shiver of the dry canes, the whirl and worry of the red-brown leaves; then it grew warmer, the rain fell once more in drops; the train boy came through with newspapers. He did not want a newspaper, so he took up his books again—his hand fell upon the Hugo—“*Les Rayons et les Ombres*”—“*Paris 4 Mai, 1840*”—with the pompous preface—“*Un*

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poète a écrit le *Paradis perdu* ; un autre poète a écrit *les ténèbres*——”

How turgid—sometimes to even silliness; the
“Holyrood——”

“Amours ! Darnley ! Rizzio ! quel néant est le vôtre !

Tous deux sont là, l'un près de l'autre ;

L'un est une ombre, et l'autre une tache au plan-
cher——”

A spot on the floor—only a Frenchman with no
sense of humor could have written that——

“Cette hospitalité mélancolique et sombre

Qu'on reçoit et qu'on rend de Stuarts à Bourbons——”

This made his thought leap to the old house at Ravenel. He looked at the fly leaf once more—by the light of day the penciled writing, though faint and fine, was even clearer—only one name was in this book—“Mary Ravenel”——he read no farther there. This was the old lady he had known ! But turning to the text again :

“La création est sans haine——”

The line made him “sit up,” as we should say—Hugo, French of Frenchmen, the genius and the *poseur* side by side, could yet write this—and this :

“ Malheur à qui dit à ses frères :
Je retourne dans le désert—
Et s'en va, chanteur inutile.
Par la porte de la cité—”

—but his mind refused to look beyond the gate of the city— He was in the city, or to leave it, as she willed.

Another night came on, the day still rainy, but now again growing warm. And at the dawn he got out at Washington.

There was no train to Frederick till the afternoon; and he could bear no rest. The Laurel hills were foothills of the South Mountain range. He stopped at the stable he had used in Washington and asked the distance to Mount Airy. The man doubted if he had a horse who would carry him there between feeds. “How about this one?” and Austin pointed at a handsome chestnut that had not been shown him. He was only for sale, it appeared; so Austin bought him, and by eight was out upon the Rock Creek road. The rain had nearly ceased, the wind was falling, and the storm was growing gentler; it was quite warm. The roads of course were heavy, but no frost had come to put them at their worst.

Up the valley of Rock Creek he followed and then struck over to the Patuxent. He saved his horse;

for he was determined to arrive. At noon there was a shift of wind and a driving rain, this time from the southward. He pressed on, for the storm was behind him. At Mount Airy he stopped for dinner. The brave horse was fed; he gave him two hours. At three he started once more. The distance now was not great. He put the horse to a gallop. At last they came to Ravenel. "The thistle shook there its lonely head: the moss whistled to the wind"—after all, it was "Ossian's" lines which recurred to his memory.

The great trees were tossing their denuded arms and the Laurel Run was in spate, as he turned into the long avenue. Old trees first seem to feel the fall; the stream, swollen with autumn rains, was the color of a lion's mane. He rode first to the stable, where he found the old servant and stalled his horse; then he paced up and down the flagged terrace before the house, while the ancient negro went through the archway and in by the servants' door. Austin looked down over the gentle valley—he had seen it thrice only, yet he knew its every feature better even than the old German park his childhood had played in. Rose leaves were falling by his feet. In a very few seconds, it seemed, the front door was swung open; the white-haired negro, now a butler, reappeared. Austin followed into the library he knew so well.

The old man announced his name and left them together.

As he came in, Miss Ravenel, who had been reading, sprang up, throwing her book aside—even then Austin noticed that it was an “Ossian,” and in a binding like his own. She was erect now and facing him. Pinckney paused in the middle of the room. Once more he saw her. He looked one moment in her face; then he began:

“I came, because I was so grieved to hear—” His voice was grave and low. Each paused a long time between their speeches.

“You are very good—friend——”

“But it is not only that. I had to say——”

The woman’s face turned a shade whiter, but she made no effort to stop him. The Ravenels had wills, and respected the wills of others—or else she saw that now, in this moment, of time, it was decreed from all eternity that these words should be spoken. Her mind held still her heart one moment—then she willed to hear them.

Austin paused. It seemed to him that he could not breathe, in the room. The air—the walls drew in too close.

“Will you come into the garden?”

Miss Ravenel took her hat from the hall chair, and a light fur; as Austin stood aside, she led the

way through the great garden window, by the conservatory. Since the *friend*, she had said no other word. In the garden, all the wind had stilled. The storm had ended, and from the box and myrtle came the warm afterbreath as of a summer rain. Miss Ravenel led the way, but he, coming into the little quadrangle, turned aside to the old dial, so that, as she turned to face him, they were some yards apart. Then he spoke. "I had to say—what I have to say, and shall always have to say—that I love you, and have always loved you, and shall always love you." It had been said. And he did not alter his standing or his looking; he neither changed nor withdrew his gaze; he only waited. And still Miss Ravenel was silent.

But on this day the man looked full at her, looked into her eyes. She was too brave to drop them. And as they stood there, face to face, in the little garden, one might have fancied a suggestion of duello in their attitudes. Then he went on.

"If you so wish, I shall never ask you of yourself, but you shall now know of me. You are all that there is to me in this world or the next. And if—" one moment his voice faltered—"if you blame me—Miss Ravenel—no man has ever loved as I do you." Now he stopped and would be silent. Again he waited. Still she did not speak. Afterwards, he

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remembered that birds were singing softly; there was a ray, through the long grass, from the declining sun; nature was at truce, above the high green garden walls.

At last, slowly, she dropped her eyes to the old stone dial—to the ground. She had not looked at him. Her gaze was introspective. Now she turned. “Had it to be told?” She spoke very low; but he would have heard the words a mile away.

“It is written that it should be told—” If he took one step toward her, he checked it. “It is written in that book you had there.” She turned a shade paler. He went on:

“This, you once said, was your world—Mary, it is ours. There is but one. If you bid me go, I go. But I pray you, let me go with you. I shall love you no less when we are gone from earth——”

Her silence, now, drove him to impetuous speech.

“I had said the sin was mine, but that there is no sin. My wife has absolved me from all bonds. I need not tell you why, but it is so. She is lost. If my child grows up with her, he is lost. We shall not injure her.”

“A woman is never lost so long as a man cares for her.”

The man shook it aside.

“We can be happy where we will. Or we can

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choose not to be happy. Before God, our lives are our own. She wishes to leave me. A divorce——”

“Do you think what a man said in a court room would make a difference—to you and I?”

Then first the rush of Austin's will encountered—oh, so gently!—her own. Yet there was a pride in the *I*. To the challenge, his own faith responded. True, no divorce would absolve them. Let them break God's law if they would; it was not the way of such as they were to make a shelter of the statutes of man. If God forbade their coming together, no human law might license it. Yet urgently he returned, shifting his lance, to the charge.

“Then let us break with it. You and I have other work elsewhere in the world than in Newport or Fifth Avenue—where they hide behind conventions. Right or wrong, we are not such as they are. Miss Ravenel, I would leave it all—and work among the people——” Very gently again she replied:

“Do you think that we are put here—you and I” (again she insisted on the pronouns, with some divination that they heartened him)—“Do you think that we are placed here, you and I, to show *that* path to our people?”

“They need never know,” murmured Austin. And then, “The sin be mine.” And then, as he saw her, like a vision, grow distant, his pulses shook and

he trembled. Yet not one moment was he moved to so much as touch her hand. The love that he felt for her went by all earthly love. She seemed to know this and she dared.

“I do not think it is a sin that you have spoken. But now——”

Then Austin strode toward her—but stopped at a few feet. His empty hands were trembling convulsively. She let him speak.

“It was always, always—from that night of the music, that day of the rain— Miss Ravenel, I was not living until then. Let me then stay near you, and stay apart—let me but see you— No, no, I love you so.”

Her sad smile had already brushed this aside. At his last words she had seen the noble way.

“No,” she said. “Listen.” One moment she fixed her eyes on the distant sky line; there was a blue rim beneath it now. The man waited. And now she turned her eyes, albeit slowly, full upon him. And their light was in his soul.

“Think what you would have me be. And if—if you would have me——”

Then there was a long silence. The man had thrown himself to the ground. It was near where she stood; but it was with no gesture of throwing himself at her feet; and the woman looked at him

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very gently, for he was telling the truth. So he knelt, and she looked down at him. Very gently, for he had spoken true. Louder, now, the robins were singing; for the setting sun gleamed on the rain-drops.

Then after quite a little time the man arose.

"If I am to go now," he said very simply, "I would like you to walk with me, up the brook where we went that day—I have a letter for you there. It is still an hour before—before the dark."

Very quietly she consented. Again they walked together. This time he led the way. A stranger would have thought them lovers. No words were spoken by them on the ascent. It was only when they got to the gray rock in the birches of the summit. The blue sky to the west was wider now, and it was getting colder. Austin sank in the ferns and began to dig in the rock with his fingers. The woman looked on, wondering. At last his hands exposed a crevice, and reaching his arm far down, he drew out a yellowed envelope. "It is a letter," he said. "It has been there three years. I never thought that I should give it to you. But you will read it, dear, now that I am going away." She took it from his hand, reading her own name on the earth-stained paper. "Only when I am gone. You need not fear

to. You know, we shall never speak like this again. We shall never see each other again."

He was following her way, now. And first now, her heart was near to sinking. She held her face quite still. And he looked at her; he looked at her slender figure, at the white hands, the contour of her face, her lips, her eyes, where in the shadow they made a dimness.

"We may not meet again." Then he added quickly, "But I am very happy, dear Miss Ravenel, very happy—if you will keep the letter." Some time he sat there, she still standing, but they said nothing more—and then she turned to go.

Coming down, it was the time for tea. Pinckney asked for his horse. He looked a moment at the "Ossian," still lying on her lounge. Without surprise, he read from the fly leaf. "My father's handwriting—I have got one in hers. Miss Ravenel, they must have parted as we have done——"

The word touched the breeding of his hostess. "You cannot ride on to-night—it is growing so cold. I am sure Ravenel should offer Mr Pinckney one night's shelter——"

Austin Pinckney smiled sadly. "You know the night and the cold don't matter—and what would be said——"

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The girl drew herself up. "We Ravenels do not usually remember what is said. And Miss Aylwin is with me——"

Austin only shook his head. "Good night, dear—it is not very cold." For the first time his hand touched hers that day. "My horse, Jackson!" Then, as he turned back, something in her face sent a shudder to his heart. "Forgive me, oh, forgive me. Miss Ravenel, I am so happy, only that it has been spoken——"

So he rode off in the twilight toward the pale azure rim that opened coldly to the northward. It was true; that night, he was very happy that he had spoken. And he rode very many miles. Poor horse! When she was sure that the door was closed, Miss Ravenel returned to the sofa she had left three hours before. The book lay open there, beneath the high mahogany arm. She buried her face in its open page, and her bright hair streamed downward——

BOOK FOUR

“In la sua voluntade é nostra pace.”

—*Paradiso.*

LVI

SOME days after the events narrated in the last chapter, Mamie Rastacq was sitting in the shadiest end of the majestic Rhinefell terrace, calling up the past. To tell over one's vanished yesterdays is never so serene an occupation as to tell one's beads; and sadly, on poor Mamie's string, she found few gems. And they, alas! had passed unnoticed at the time; the bulk, she found, had been but shining glass. How they had deceived her, though! Did they deceive all women? They had, certainly, that poor woman upstairs.

It is well, at one's worst, to think of others. Mrs Rastacq, of late years, had been taught to see this; so she shook her thought from her own self and set it to think of Dorothy. She had been very silent with her, uncommunicative, but Mamie did not feel it was for lack of mental process on her part.

Mamie had seen very well what had happened, and Dorothy doubtless knew it; and Mamie liked her, at all events, for being too proud to try to explain.

And while Mrs Rastacq was so sitting, the Major joined her. For Mamie had cast about for a guest, and decided, on the whole, that he would best do.

The Major had not been at Gansevoort Manor, and had made no effort to discover what had happened there. He had contented himself with explaining his absence from the house party on the ground that Pete was an unlicked cub; adding, only for Mamie's ear, that he trusted he was now a licked one. The addendum had suggested to Mamie that he was still not, possibly, too uninformed to be in a condition to render valuable advice.

But to-day old Brandon was out of his most excellent temper. "I am tired of it all," he said, as he threw himself, almost brusquely, into a chair beside her.

"Tired of what?" said Mamie gently.

"Tired of the set you live in. Tired of the Duvals, Einsteins, Marosinis, Gonzagas—and the Markoffs—and your Pizzis and your Pazzis and your Puzzis—the French have a word for them—*rastaquouères*—pardon me, I didn't mean to pun upon your name——"

"My name was Livingston," said Mamie. "But what are the *rastaquouères*?"

"They are the people who live in Paris and are not Frenchmen—the people who thrive and fatten on a society they have not made—the people who swarm in sunny France like the locusts and would run away at the shadow of a Prussian helmet—the people who

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are sunned to monsters in our air of liberty and equal opportunity and have no patriotic gratitude—the people who are ignorant of the truth that has made us free and neither care nor understand— Oh, I am not narrow—they are not all Jews and dagoes—there are political *rastaquouères* at Washington, moneyed ones in New York, and some of the worst of them are Yankees from Ohio. ‘*Toll, toll, überall toll—*’ I feel like old Sachs—only not so good-natured—it is a Rasta world. And our Eva loves it.”

“Speaking of Puzzis,” said Mamie, “she wants to go abroad.”

“And the best thing she can do. And speaking of Hans Sachs, there comes your Walther—hers, I mean.”

“What!” cried Mamie, starting up. “He’s off duck shooting.”

“Perhaps his ducks are in his saddlebags. But my eyes, thank goodness, are still good.”

The carriage road took a wide circle around the great lawn and then led away straight opposite the house thus made visible, as in a French park, at every *rond-point*; and coming along it, at the gallop, was a man on a foam-flecked horse. It was certainly Pinckney, for he saw them, and took off his hat, then disappeared, to the left, as the circular avenue

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plunged into the forest. The Major, who had stood up and waved his handkerchief, sat down again.

“He is more an Arthur than a Walther,” said Mamie pensively. “And as for Eva——”

“Well, what for Eva?” snapped the Major savagely. “What do we know of her? What did he know of her? He didn’t write any prize songs after he married her.”

“That was left to Beckmesser,” smiled Mamie.

“Oh, the ideal woman is a nuisance. The canonization of the sex by the nineteenth century is as much one extreme as the simple view of the mediæval Christian—who saw in her only the surest mode of being damned—was the other extreme. The modern woman can no longer make a good healthy *hausfrau*—what early Christian first discovered she has a soul? Give me the normal, unmorbid classic view—before St. Paul and Augustine elevated her to any sinful eminence.”

“And what do you consider the classic view of her?”

“That she makes a charming mistress, but a bad divinity.”

“Oh, I was speaking of good women,” remonstrated Mamie.

The Major looked at her as if he had found a new note. Then he burst out again. “Oh, the good

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woman. Give me the bad. The good woman—who glorifies the earth awhile for a man, then breaks his heart—such a one is like the beguiling fairy in the old knight's tale—she takes and leads you by the hand down into the enchanted valley and then, when both of you discover where you are, she stabs and leaves you. Good women may do more harm than bad.”

He stopped, for Austin Pinckney strode out of the main door. Booted and spurred, he had not stopped to brush the dried mud of yesterday from his gaiters. To the Major it was obvious that he had ridden hard. “Where is Dorothy?” said he.

“In her room,” answered Mamie, grasping his hand. “Shall I show you where it is?”

“Please tell her first I am come, if you will be so kind, Mrs Rastacq.” He waited until she had left the terrace; then turned to the Major.

“I thought you were off shooting,” said the Major hastily.

“I have been on a riding trip,” said Pinckney, “but to-day I had a telegram from my office. Mrs Somers, my wife's mother, died in Paris this morning.”

In a minute Mamie had returned. “She is waiting for you.”

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"Mrs Somers has just died—in Paris," said the Major.

"Oh," cried Mamie, with the natural cry of any woman; she had never known Mrs Somers. "Do you want me to tell her?"

"I think I had better tell her first," said Austin. "But I wish you would come with me."

The Major continued to sit on the terrace. After a quarter of an hour had gone Mamie returned. "What will he do?" asked he.

"She will go to Paris. He will not go with her. She leaves by to-morrow's steamer. He is going to Lenox to the baby. She has her maid, who has been with her before. After all, she has often been over without him. He is not needed there."

"I am not so sure of that," said Brandon.

Mamie answered subconsciously: "He will go wherever he is needed."

The Major looked at her, but said nothing more. After a while Austin and Dorothy came down together. She was not in black, but she made no complaint of her want of mourning, as she might once have done. She did not seem to think of her dress. The Major went up and shook her hand; then Mamie put her arms about her and led her away.

LVII

FATHER BASIL CONYNGHAME, of the Brotherhood of the Virgin, that night knelt more than his allotted time before the altar that was in the chapel at the end of the long gallery. The great chapel was at the end of the cloisters below; this little oratory, dedicated to the Child Virgin, was dressed with a simple altar, a hassock or two, and plain wooden benches for those who were too weak to kneel; it was used only by the invalids from the hospital and, at night, for the lonely orisons of those of the brethren who felt the call to penitence or prayer. Now Basil Conynghame had knelt there many hours and searched his soul.

Not in vain, it appeared; for when, at last, he rose (it was nearing the hour of prime and the breath of a dawn of June was in the garden) his eye was bright and clear and his face (though always, with its high cheek bones and aquiline nose, the face of an enthusiast) serene. To one of those who quailed—or melted—before his burning eyes, in his ministrations of the working day, it would have seemed a still newer revelation, so pale and strong was it, so pure, so radiant—"calm with having looked upon the front of God." As that of the

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Florentine when Lethe's shriving stream was past and before the rebirth in Eunoë brought eternal remembrance and its deathless joy. Like one whose soul Lethe put to sleep before the message of the Magdalen—for "first was Mary Magdalene to see the risen Lord"; the woman that had been lost first found the hope of heaven.

All that night he lay in prayer. One would not say, he wrestled with the Lord, that is the prayer of the pre-Christian, Jew, or Puritan. The Christian, most of all the later Catholic, learns first the lesson that His will is peace. Long since, years since, he had dedicated, not his walks and ways alone, but his soul and self to God; his mind and heart to service of his fellow-men. There was naught now remaining of the self that had been Basil Conynghame.

So Conynghame had not been praying for himself, unless to avert a sorrow that he would share with all his world be deemed a selfish prayer. And now he bathed, and walked in the garden, as he planned his work for that day. After all, he could go on alone now; the summer's tasks were easy and the winter's work well done. He listened joyously to the singing of the birds and buried his gaunt face in a great new rose. For Conynghame was no ascetic, except as his nature quailed at grosser pleasures, nor indeed a Roman Catholic, though many

an honest clergyman thought their "Brotherhood" as bad. He called himself a priest, and had taken the vows of poverty and celibacy; he was a Catholic, but not a Roman Catholic; their very name betokened not Mariolatry, but tenderness for her that had been the mother of God. But he had been praying for a woman now.

She had given that year of her life to stony ways; she had trod by his side in their humble path; and now, in his deep vision, he had bade her go. No one is too high for humble service; but one star differeth from another in glory. There are many mansions; and some can best serve in the wider world. There were other ministering angels whose hearts were as kind as Mary Ravenel's, other nurses for the sick with hands as gentle; no one who had such vision of the perils of the time, the aims or lack of aims of women, the needs of men. He had chosen for his own the meaner streets of his native Baltimore; a larger world, the whole Republic that they both loved, had need of ladies such as (he had found) was this his favorite cousin's child. For Conyng-hame, like many of us, believed that commercialism had done its worst, and that we Americans are now at last once more upon the plane of an ideal, a high resolve, again to lift our country to the level of its mission on the earth.

Then, too, there was her health—her bodily health—the first duty to the Creator, even of an angel, is to live the life on earth. The mediæval poet never brought his angel nearer to this world than the garden of Paradise: the profounder modern mind had placed her still on earth. So Conynghame had urged her, when her strength, that spring, the year after her grandmother died, showed signs of failing, to leave the close city for a while and travel with some friends abroad. She had had no garden to walk in, as had he—Ravenel was gone and she had no place now, in New York.

He had given her, that day, when she left, a handful of the sweet Southern jasmine; and now he plucked a blossom or two that still remained in the garden, as its fragrance reminded him of her. He did not wholly understand. To such as Basil Conynghame it was no mystery that any woman should choose the single life—it was his creed to hold that such might be the higher service—yet, somehow, it was a puzzle to him that this one had—perhaps it is a corollary of the doctrine of an unmarried priesthood that a woman's highest service is rendered with and through her husband. But in his secret soul Basil believed that no priest could really see the highest truth, minister so deeply to the human heart, as he whose soul had soared beyond

the bonds of sex. He would have denied it—humbly denied it to any holding a different faith—but it may be thought the prejudice was there. His friend Austin Pinckney knew far more of the world, was a wider man, a far more potent instrument for the world's good, even a wiser man, than he—but the priest could not but feel that there were some things the lawyer could not judge so well. Yet how Pinckney himself had grown from that brave young boy he had married! He had seen clearly enough, as he had thought, into the white page of his youth; it was a white page, he was sure; but it was blank. Now something in the man, not in his mind, that was clear enough, but in the *man*—baffled him. True, he had heard, in the remote way that priests may hear such rumors, that his marriage had not been “happy.” To such a view as Conynghame's, the very phrase was unintelligible. It was no question of happiness. Any marriage, every marriage, should be a sacrament—or it should not be. It was the very forgetfulness of this, thought Conynghame, that made the shame of the modern secular law.

For a moment his mind had wandered; then it reverted to his cousin. True, he had once spoken of her to Pinckney; his friend had simply answered that he knew her. “She is the noblest woman I have

ever known," he had urged; but Austin made no response. Conynghame supposed that he had been bred a Romanist; his wife, he fancied, was of no religion. But Austin's mother had been a Boston Unitarian; his father was consul to a Lutheran court.

Conynghame thought of his work for the day: his work for many days to come. Consumption, the chief scourge of their poor, was less dangerous in the summer; the people could be given sunlight, could be got away; but there were the children's ailments, most terrible in a Southern city, and the sorrows, profounder almost than any human sorrow, that come with the dying of a little child, and, more than always, the desolate homes of erring men. How marvelous after all the love of women! Of the thousand homes that Basil visited there were not ten whose misery was not caused by sins of men. And the women's truth—it was the "upper" class where women took these things lightly—that was why women like his cousin were more needed there. Well, he had promised to write to her about the poor people she had left. She was not coming back, to labor in his vineyard; but she had not lost her care for the souls that dwelt there. Hers was no perfunctory service; it was the very wealth of her heart that had enabled her to scatter largess of its love among them. His mind ran not with the Major's.

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The Rev. Basil Conynghame gathered his long frame together. It was time to be up and doing. The day promised to be hot. Even as he did so, he heard the tinkle of the garden bell, and strange! it was his friend Austin stood before him. He was passing through Baltimore, he said, on his way to Washington—the thought had occurred to him to get off there for breakfast. He was not needed in the Supreme Court until two o'clock—how was Conynghame? He wanted a walk in his garden—how lovely those jasmines were.

They walked and conversed desultorily. Pinckney did not seem to have much to say, but Conynghame knew nothing of politics and ascribed his abstraction to this. The priest was aware, at least, that his friend just then was fighting with beasts at Ephesus. "How is Haviland's campaign getting on?" he did ask. But Pinckney only answered that it was hardly a campaign yet, merely a question of the people's wresting the nomination from the New York machine. He lingered on, though, and Conynghame felt that it was time for his work to be beginning. Intentionally he led their steps toward the gate again.

"Have you seen anything of your cousin, Miss Ravenel, this winter? I heard she had been ill."

"She has not been ill—only a little overworked.

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Yesterday she went abroad, for a good long rest, I hope."

"I am very glad," said Austin. "Is she to be gone long?"

There was nothing unusual in his voice, but the man of the world suddenly became as a little child to this priest of souls. After a quick glance, which Austin did not meet, he answered:

"A year—I hope, perhaps more. She is not strong."

"I am very glad that she will have the rest she needs. You know my opinion of her."

"She is much interested in Mr Haviland's campaign." Now Conynghame forbore to look at the other.

"Tell her, if you write, that it is promising well. Now I must go for my train. And I suppose you have your work to do."

"We all have our work to do."

They made a round of the garden once more and neither spoke. Then Conynghame:

"How is your wife, and the boy?"

"The boy is fine," laughed Austin. "My wife is well, too. She is in Paris with her sister. Little Austin is with me—or rather, with his aunt, at Lenox."

Austin felt curiously conscious that this man—

this priest—was meditating what he should say. But some minutes more went by. Then they came once more to the gate. Then suddenly he felt the burning eyes blaze through the curtain of his own. And it was the priest that spoke. But he spoke very gently, and he laid his emaciated hand lightly on Austin's as he did so:

“Remember, my dear friend—for Mr Haviland, for you, for all of us—shall I seem presumptuous if I say it to one who is far abler than I—to one, a Catholic, perhaps, who well may have his own priest—remember my years may help me to see, at fifty, better than one who is in the heat of conflict, yet in the middle years—if I say to you that this world is a world not of fulfillment, but of preparation?”

Conynghame saw the younger man start; for Mary Ravenel had said it to him last. He looked away. So Basil added: “It matters not whether Haviland gets his election; the thing is to prepare the people and in so doing to prepare himself.”

But Austin did not take Basil Conynghame's remark for Haviland.

So he left him, with his thought; and the priest walked there alone with his. By his own love, he had seen.

LVIII

A WESTERN man comes to New York for the first time with a certain sense of defiance. He would indignantly deny that the great city imposes on his imagination—and he affects, perhaps in the year 1896 with belief, to condemn its works and despise its ways—yet the defiant note remains. In that sense the Mississippi River still divides America—a boundary more significant than it had in all the centuries it flowed between France and England and so on into Spain. “New York is not American,” they say in the country that a century ago was France. And periodically they revolt at the tribute that they pay to it.

Yet in the height of such an outbreak Armitage, of Arizona, sought that city. Three years, off and on, he had been at Washington, seeking only to get permission to work a public benefit, and he had hardly been put off with fair words. Bills to award pensions—land grants—private privileges—passed by his little vehicle as if their wheels were greased. Bills to take lands from the public—to lease lands from the Indians—to brevet monopoly—all were taken in turn; only the bills to protect the public—bills for pure food, fair dealings, equal rates—

slept with his own in the Senate committee room. He wanted only to make land, not to take it—to make fields of waving grain where not one blade grew before—but his river was officially navigable and he needed the Senate's kind permission. Yet he never lost heart, or, what is more, his temper, until one day when he discovered that the very Senator of a neighboring State who introduced his bill was secretly opposing it. And as he was patiently waiting his turn, in his committee room, he listened to an argument (it was for the inviolability of these very Indian lands) made by Mr Austin Pinckney, of New York. And Armitage noticed that the chairman of the committee, a Senator from Kansas, whose custom was to remove his boots and go to sleep in his blue woolen socks on his plush sofa during many of his hearings, sat up all through Pinckney's discourse. Diffidently, after it was over, he then reintroduced himself; it was six years since they had met; but the reminder was unnecessary, for Pinckney had greeted his friend with outstretched hands. Then he had told him of his troubles; and Pinckney bade him come to New York. "You should have gone there first," said he.

But to Armitage, who found getting his charter so difficult, the raising of the money when the law was passed had appeared a simple matter. And so Pinck-

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ney, that year, went back without him. It was only when Congress again adjourned without action that he bethought him of the lawyer's advice. And withdrawing his dead bill from its pigeonhole, he packed it up with his plans and surveys. All his fortune was there—in land. Even then, he had not been able to buy up all the lands over which his *acequias* might flow. But he was willing enough that others should profit too—only now it was a desert; not even useful as a cattle range—the very Moquis and Apaches abhorred it—he was the first white man that had taken an interest in it since the courtly Coronado marched through it, a century before the village of New Amsterdam was born or thought of.

Armitage's sense of dignity as a Westerner prevented his going to any but the very best hotel, though he had very little ready money left in Washington and not much more at home. He wore a black coat and a felt hat—it was not an unfamiliar wear in Washington—and went downtown by the Elevated. When he found Pinckney's offices he was amazed at their magnitude—to be sure, there were several partners, but the rooms through which he was ushered seemed interminable. There were dozens of clerks, a library; in the last room before you reached this a very beautiful girl sat alone, and but for the typewriting machine he had taken her for

a lady client; he removed his hat instinctively. "Mr Pinckney?"

"Mr Pinckney is with a—friend," she said. He noticed that she used this word with a touch of amusement. "Have you an appointment?"

"I—I did not think of that," said he. "I come from Arizona." The distance of the journey, or the simplicity of the excuse, must have impressed her; for after looking him full in the face—she has such lovely eyes, thought Armitage, as he felt himself redden—she said that she thought Mr Pinckney would see him.

"I should not wish to disturb him now if he is busy."

"Oh, I do not think he is very busy," the lady said, this time distinctly with a smile; and, after knocking, she entered the next room. Left alone, Armitage noticed a very handsome bouquet of long-stemmed roses upon her desk. So it was New York that permitted ladies such as she was to take to type-writing! He could not but feel she would have done better on the Western prairies. The door opened and a man appeared, of a different type from any that Armitage had seen downtown: healthy and pleasant-faced, but awkward and with a stooping gait, and dressed in a rough homespun with a wide straw hat. It had not escaped the quick-witted

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Westerner that most of the men on Wall Street wore silk hats and frock coats, nor did the look escape him that lingered on the lady typewriter's face as this man said, "*Good morning, Miss Aylwin,*" and went out. Meantime Pinckney was calling to him to come in.

He laid his plans before him, and the latter listened attentively. Once or twice he opened his mouth as if to speak; then he seemed to decide to remain silent. The area to be covered had increased somewhat since he had talked with him six years before in Arizona; now Armitage thought he should need seven millions of dollars. But Pinckney only seemed to want to talk about free silver. Like all his part of the country, at that time, Armitage believed that a moral wrong had been perpetrated—intentionally, and by a few participants—whereby the value of gold had been artificially enhanced. But his friend seemed to view the unlimited coinage of silver in a similar unmoral light. Still, he took it pleasantly enough. So Armitage said:

"I told you six years ago that Wall Street was the dealer, and every twenty years or so you call in all our chips, and now you say our white ones are no good! And you've got most of the blue ones out of the game!" But Pinckney only smiled at this. He was graver than Armitage had remembered him

and seemed much older; in Arizona, Armitage had thought himself the older of the two. But he had a very winning smile, and Armitage, merely saying that there was nothing now to do in Washington, waited.

"It is only that I don't want you to be disappointed—it is a very bad year to get money in New York."

"I only want a few introductions," said the Westerner confidently.

"That, of course—I can take you now—the Miners' Bank."

"I don't think I'll go to-day," said Armitage, glancing at his hat. "I suspect I am a little wild and woolly. And I think, on the whole, you had better not accompany me. It will be less embarrassing to both of us. A list of names is all I require—of banks or bankers who will be interested in my proposition." Armitage shared the usual Western tendency to slip into Latin-English the moment he was the least bit self-conscious; otherwise his diction was as good as his manners were simple. Austin himself saw no reason for the change of apparel; the very slouch hat and black broadcloth suit lent a reality to the irrigation scheme; however, with the tact of middle life, he forbore all comment.

"Let me know if you need my help."

"Oh, I'll round them up alone," laughed the other. "If I lasso any, you can come in for the branding. It must be possible to throw one out of such a herd"—and he looked over the long list that Austin had just dashed off for him. "I hope that Mrs Pinckney enjoys good health." It was the first shade of embarrassment he had shown.

"She is very well, I heard only to-day. She is in the south of France. The boy is with me—that's the last picture of him."

"Good!" cried Armitage. "Mr Pinckney, he looks fine. I want to hear of him. You must send him to the ranch and let me make a cowboy of him. If I may presume, will you send your lady my respectful compliments?"

"You may presume anything, old fellow, only don't mister me. And you must dine with me to-night."

"Only on one condition—that I'm not to bother you with business. I'm not going to beset your dinner table! I'll let you know when it's all done."

"When you've rounded 'em up," laughed Austin. And he thought how much a finer instinct of commercial manners the stranger had than many of New York's successes; they made no scruple to discuss business affairs at feast or funeral. When Armitage had left, he took a long look at the photo-

graph before replacing it in his desk. Then he took up his wife's letter.

"I feel that I must stay with Daisy one more summer," she said. *"Her husband is quite impossible, and I fear she may have contracted another attachment. At least, there is no doubt of it on the boy's part. He is a silly young fellow, just out of Harvard, and quite ten years younger than Daisy is—but I really am afraid it may ruin his career. Please write and tell me what I ought to do—and thank you so much for letting us take the villa at Cimiez again."* Then, at the bottom of the letter were the words, *"I hope you are coming over this summer."* For one reason or another, Dorothy had never returned to New York since her mother's death. Two winters had been passed with Austin's German sisters.

To Köllner, coming back, it appeared that Mr Pinckney was in a brown study. Papers were on his desk, but he was not reading anything. Even his eyes seemed fixed on a point of space. He turned, and tiptoed out very gently so that Austin might not hear him.

For ten days, nothing was heard of the business, though Austin saw Armitage frequently. Then (he had dined with Austin, in perfect cheerfulness, the night before) he strode in one summer morning, wear-

ing the old slouch hat. "Mr. Pinckney, when I talked about the money power out on the range, I was half jollyng. I thought the boys that used that expression were the ones that couldn't walk down Broadway for fear of the high buildings. Well, I'm a tender-foot on Wall Street, but it's taken me only ten days to find it's a real thing. If I hadn't worn my wool on the outside, I'd 'a' found it out in one. And now I've struck the trail for Arizona——"

Austin pushed his papers back with a laugh. "What's the matter, Dick?"

"Look here, Pinckney, do you know Sherman C. Pillsbury, director in the —— National Bank?"

"Of course," smiled the other.

"Oh, he ain't president—he's just a plain director. Then S. C. Pillsbury, trustee of the Universal Life Insurance Company?"

Austin nodded.

"Same man. And Sherman Carter Pillsbury, vice-president of the Cosmopolitan Trust Company? Same man." Armitage went on hurriedly. "And J. Watt Wilcox, office on Broadway, banker, president? Same man. And James G. Duval, president European Trust Company—no, he's only on the executive committee? Same man—though. And Jacob Einstein, Junior (he's about eighty though), on the executive committee of the Cosmic Life?"

Same man. They're all the same man. They're the Money Power, and there ain't anybody else got any money in New York. And their names don't show on the signboards. We've hardly heard of them in the West. They're not Vanderbilt or Astor or J. P. Morgan, but I tell you they've got a lead-pipe cinch on the industry of eighty million people. What's more, I tell you they ain't four men, but only one of them—the others is just, you may say, visions— When I'd seen Pillsbury I'd seen 'em all—and it would have been just the same if I'd seen Duval or Einstein. They're all tied up in their own lariats like a bunch of stampeded cayuses—throw one and you throw 'em all—they throw you and you're down—*and* out."

"Come, come," laughed Austin. "I may have written names in one connection——"

"There are others?"

"Well, there's the Standard Oil crowd——"

Armitage groaned.

"There are the Jews——"

Armitage groaned again, but not so badly.

"Am I not right?"

"You were very quick in finding it out."

"How do you account for it?"

Austin paused a moment; then he spoke seriously, and his words carried conviction to the hearer.

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“*Money* — mobile money — is the greatest earthly power. Our very nursery tales told us this: of the purse of Fortunatus; of the hoard of the Nibelung, fashioned to a Ring, that wields the Will of the world—yet we forget it. Now there is but one way to the hoard—for it is made up of our savings. The work of the hands—in farms or factories or railways—has no harm in it. It is *money*, ready money, that is the power—and the danger. And what do we, the American people, do with our savings? In the old days a farmer, a little manufacturer, a shopman, when he saved, could enlarge his business, add to his mill— In these days of trusts there are no small trades, no independent factories—so now he saves. And eighty million people put their savings into savings banks—there they do little harm, for these can only loan on mortgages—or into trust companies—they are more dangerous—or into life insurance—and that is the most dangerous of all. You have simply struck the concentration of control of quick capital. Eighty million people have handed over the dynamic power of all their savings to a group of six or eight men.”

“*One man,*” persisted Armitage. “I have met him.”

“Oh, no—you only met Mime—now let’s try Alberich!”

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“And yet you are surprised that Americans hate Wall Street!”

“Are you not here wanting eight millions? Where else can you get it? Let us be fair. It is this very saving, this concentration, of capital, that enables it to serve the myriad American enterprises—how long would it take you to go among the people who have deposited this money—the business men who have struggled, good years and bad, to meet their life insurance—and get the loan you need? Then, small capital is cowardly; it takes a mighty hoard to brave great enterprises. All America has been built up in this way. It is like the great storage lake that holds up the water for your own river valley.”

“Sherman C. Pillsbury holds it up all right. That may all be, but I’d like more hands at the sluices. Where may this Alberich live?”

Austin laughed and gave him Haviland’s address. “He will tell you.”

“You’re sure his real name ain’t S. Carter Pillsbury?”

“*Now* will you vote the Democratic ticket?” laughed the other.

“Or J. Watt Wilcox?” muttered Armitage as he closed the door.

Austin rang his bell. “Send me Miss Aylwin,”

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he said to the boy who entered. He meant to dictate a line to John. But the boy returned with the message that she was out. It was unusual for her to be out in the morning hours. She had absolutely no interests outside of the office.

At the same moment Köllner entered. He had been in and out of the office for weeks or more.

“It ain’t no use, sir,” said he. “I might as well go home. I think she does not even want to see me.”

And then, more gently, more sympathetically than he had needed to be with the healthy Armitage, Austin sat down with the young German and began to talk of the affairs of Laurel Run.

LIX

JOHAN HAVILAND was sitting in the firelit library, Grace’s two hands in his. We have not seen so much of these friends as we could have wished: braw deeds mak’ ill telling, said the Scot; perhaps they counted more in the world than in our story. Moreover, their romance was over and has been elsewhere told. John had bravely won her, and her whole heart was his. But the elect of earthly paradise stay not within its gates—what are wings

given for but to fly afar? aye, and even to the places "mute of light"—it was only Dante's dainty lady would not trust her wings beyond the stream of Lethe. Grace knew her city's world better than the "Man in the street"—better than most ministers—better (for she saw the heart's higher secret) even than the district party leader. While John was mayor it was she who would tell him what the city needed. And now that the wave of national prosperity had caused the machine to believe they might elect an easier man, it was she that bade him stand aside in patience. Party ideals, even national ideals, were fading in the blaze of wealth; there is a time to serve, a time to stand and wait; so there was a fight against his renomination, but this disturbed her not at all. Daughter of the grand old Massachusetts judge, she had been born in the ermine; but it is the rust of idleness, not the stains of conflict, that leave the lasting spot. Should he withdraw? Surely not—the people might be misled, but not for want of an honest leader. And John, who loved to hear the voicing of his own resolution on her gentle lips, patted the hands, still so pretty, that lay between his own. "And what have you been doing?"

Grace said she had a pleasant surprise for him. "I have been to see Mary Ravenel—she has just

got home." John sprang to his feet. "Now don't go around there directly—besides you don't know where she is."

"Where is she?" laughed John. "She's worth a dozen state committees."

"She's got the nicest little apartment you ever saw—around on Thirty-ninth Street—and it was all quite ready for her. The steamer only got in this morning, but that lovely *protégée* of hers—Miss Aylwin—had been around there for days, fixing it up. Do you know, she even had flowers there from Laurel Run."

John laughed. He guessed that he knew who sent the flowers.

"John, will Austin be nominated for Attorney General?"

"He can have the nomination if he wants it—the Democrats are particularly virtuous just now. But why?"

"You know, dear, I think he ought to go to Europe for a whole year? Poor Dorothy will not come home and perhaps she ought not to. Mary had a great deal to say about that sister of Dorothy's. It seems she has left her husband."

John grumbled something about a good ride.

"But that foolish Brevier boy is still with her."

Miss Brevier, I know, is heartbroken. Yet I can see, Mary thinks they all ought to come home. She despises Paris society more than ever. You just ought to hear her wave the American flag."

"If the American flag follows Mary Ravenel," laughed John, "it won't matter about the Constitution! Ravenels have led it before."

Gracie sighed. "I am afraid we need more Ravenels."

"Why won't she marry?"

Grace shook her head. "Mamie has a theory, but she won't tell. I never saw anything like the sympathy that exists between those two, or anything like the change it has made in Mamie. If Mamie could only have married a man like Austin Pinckney."

"I am not so sure of that. It takes sometimes the worst in others to develop the best in us. Tony Rastacq, once and forever, disillusionized the poor girl of Vanity Fair. If I were a woman, I should fall in love with Austin Pinckney. But women follow a more ungentle spirit. It has not made much difference in his Dorothy."

"*I* am not so sure of that. Mary Ravenel saw quite a little of her in Paris. She thinks she is much changed."

"I don't for one moment think there was ever

anything really bad about her. But she was worse than wicked! She was shallow, she had no soul."

"The Greeks made the butterfly the symbol of immortality——"

"Hush," said John. "You mustn't say such things in New York society! That erudition is provincial—it savors of Berkshire, Mass.! How is the State Commission?"

"John, if you don't run, who'll they put in?"

"Whom, whom. Some Orange County store-keeper, I suppose—a fellow with a human smell about him—a man with magnetism."

"I'm not a schoolmarm. If they do, all we've done is thrown away. You're magnetic enough for a governor——"

"Well, why can't you get New York City to take an interest?"

"They've no interest, except for business. They're wonderful in commercial public interest—anything to promote the port of New York—but as for civic interests—why, Boston has twice as much!"

"That's because they've given us their railways and we and Washington have bottled up their port. They've leisure, now, for charity and public work—they've got no other business! The creditor attitude destroys initiative. They still can sit and cut their

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coupons—but our tariff will end by making Boston another Halifax. They have time for altruism, but we are out for business. New York was always the same. It slept quietly under the British flag from 1776 to 1783—it was the only town in the colonies that didn't throw the British out. At the time of the Port Bill, a New York committee reported that 'they could not discover the wisdom of hazard-ing the freedom of their own port by indulging any romantic sympathy for the people of Boston.' Look here!"

John took down a "Life of John Jay," from which he read: "*An injurious influence was exerted on the manners and habits of society in New York by the number of adventurers whose residence was merely temporary and who resorted thither for the purpose of accumulating fortunes.*" That is 1775. You see, it was always so! But we prosper, all the same."

"What Major Brandon calls the Rastas prosper—none of them care about the country. Not the Duvals nor the Marosinis nor the Delgados nor the Einsteins. One Jew, Markoff, is liberal with his subscriptions. The New Englanders and the Presbyterians are the only ones who work. The Knickerbockers are too lazy for public life."

"They're going to give us a President," laughed

IN CURE OF HER SOUL

John. "And the Jays themselves—and Jerome—and the Bayards?"

"All Huguenots. Mary herself is a Huguenot. Austin, too, comes from South Carolina. Freddy Wiston is the only New Yorker I can count on. Even Mr Gower comes from Connecticut."

Whereupon John kissed her for a bigoted provincial——

There came a ring at the door that reverberated through the house; such a bell as was full of presage—there are such bells—others are as the tinkling of cymbals. Both Grace and John started up. They were not deceived—the door of the peaceful library was flung open, and Mary Ravenel, not waiting for the servant, appeared.

"Mr Haviland? I am so glad—you must come at once—I have got a carriage—a terrible thing has happened——"

Beautiful she stood there, with a face of snow. She was like the angel Azrael.

LX

IT was on this day that Armitage had been called back by Austin to New York. Conservatism had long since triumphed, and capital emerged from its holes. His money had been raised. For the

millions advanced, the bankers asked to have an equal amount of mortgage bonds. Besides this they were to be given, for nothing, half the capital stock. Armitage would have demurred at this, but that the terms demanded were no longer a surprise to him. They were the best that had been hinted of, the year before; and even then they had not been willing to advance the money. Moreover, he saw that Pinckney had something more to say.

“You will say these terms are outrageous; that you are giving half your property for the privilege to borrow on the other half. But what is that half worth without the irrigation? These are the usual terms to inventors. Half to the inventor, half to the financier, besides the actual cash outlay. In a sense, you have invented this land. The value of the invention remains to be proved.”

“I have given twenty years of my life to this enterprise—what have they done?” Armitage spoke earnestly, but not querulously.

“Well, for one thing, they have got your act of Congress. It was rushed through at the special session called last month to pass the tariff act. You remember there was a few days’ lull when the Senate and House failed to agree? Benton, of Missouri, started to agitate his anti-trust act, so the speaker let your bill get in ahead.”

IN CURE OF HER SOUL

“My bill?”

“Certainly—here it is. And here’s your charter and your list of directors.”

“Sawtelle? Why, that’s the very Kansas senator that opposed it behind my back—said the waters might back up into Kansas.”

“Well, he’s taken quite a lot of stock, I hear. You and I have nothing to do with that. They can *sell* their stock to whom they like. And I’ve got you a good man for treasurer—Frederick Wiston. He’ll be with you for the right thing, every time. So you’ll really still have control of the company. Besides, you’re president. And both Levison Gower and Haviland are on your board—it was he got the life-insurance people to give the money for your bonds.”

“Oh, S. Carter Pillsbury again,” sighed Armistage.

“Not quite,” laughed Austin. “And with a difference—you and Wiston are the difference. But Pillsbury had to go in.”

“I make no doubt it is the best arrangement possible.”

“Not quite. For I insisted on one thing more—that your time and money should be counted as well as their financial influence. And your five millions of land are to be taken at fifty cents the acre—Span-

ish title proved. That will give you two million and a half of the bonds—one-third the total issue. I am sorry, but I couldn't get them to count your time! They said you must take stock for that—as they have done. You know, old man, a minute at Washington may be as a thousand years—in Arizona.”

Armitage laughed, this time unreservedly, “Pinckney, you have done all that man could do—and more than any Westerner could.” He grasped his hand. Then, as he stood there, he dropped it, without a word. “What was that?” cried Austin.

A shot had rung out from the adjoining room. Austin flung the door open and rushed in. The Westerner waited to be summoned; he had recognized the gunshot, even to the bore of the revolver. But it was but for a moment.

“Armitage!”

He saw upon the short couch at one end of the room the fainting form of a woman, supported in the arms of the young German. He remembered to have seen him there the year before. With a glance only for the revolver, noting how it lay there on the floor, he was at Miss Aylwin's side. Köllner, speechless, still held her in his arms, but her head had fallen. Pinckney rushed out to the telephone. “Lay her down,” Armitage said. “Open her dress.” Then,

as the German seemed not to understand, he shoved a cushion beneath her head and gently laid it there; disengaging the other's arms from his support, he quickly tore the collar from her throat. The poor girl gave one shuddering sigh. Köllner grasped his hand to prevent him. "Man, she must breathe!" And noting that the bullet had gone through her dress, he tore it apart with his two hands. There was a second sigh and a quiver of the eyelids; and the poor heart stilled.

"She is gone!"

Köllner threw himself on his knees again, as if to stanch the wound; but it was not bleeding externally. Then he drew her dress together and laid his handkerchief over her face. He stood up and looked at Armitage.

"She iss dead."

"How did it happen?"

The German looked a minute at him silently. Armitage fancied that he had lost his wits. Köllner bent down again, over the body of the woman he had loved in vain. Then, without rising from his knees, he turned his eyes again to Armitage. The Westerner met their gaze; this time he refrained from asking questions. He turned away, and stooped to pick up the revolver.

"Leave it alone!"

It was Pinckney, returned. With him were the people from the other offices and a man whom Armitage saw to be a surgeon. But Austin closed the door as the doctor entered. Armitage caught one glance of an awe-struck group, the messengers, the clerks. The doctor bent but a minute over Miss Aylwin's body; then reverently he replaced the handkerchief where Köllner had disposed it and closed her gentle eyes upon this world.

LXI

IT is all over. Death was quite instantaneous." It was the doctor who spoke.

Thank God for that, seemed to be their thought; only Fritz Köllner gave a sort of smothered sob. The surgeon bent himself and said a word in Austin's ear. "No," Armitage heard him say. "Please see to it yourself. But then you must come back here——"

"Come back?"

"Come back until they come." The surgeon left the three men sitting there. To Austin the hours seemed endless. Already, at the main door, he could hear the insistent buzz of reporters. He had telephoned to Mr Gresham, now doubtless at his

house; the old gentleman usually left the office after three. And he had caused a guarded message to be sent Miss Ravenel.

Köllner still seemed like one dazed. Armitage watched him curiously. He remembered now to have seen him often in Miss Aylwin's office, not once but many times before. Perhaps he wondered why they were waiting.

Austin was called a moment to the outer office. As he went out Köllner rose and walked over to the couch where the poor woman's body was lying. There, he sank upon his knees.

Armitage tiptoed softly back into the library.

When he returned, it was because of a loud knocking at the outer door. Then he heard Pinckney's voice in colloquy with several men. In a minute more the door opened and the police came in.

"Everything is as we found it, captain." As Pinckney spoke, the German stood up. The police officer but glanced at him. "This is the revolver." The officer took a ruler from the desk and, taking up the revolver, lay the ruler on the floor where the revolver had been, pointing it as the revolver had pointed. Armitage witnessed these acts with evident disapproval.

"No doubt, sir, no doubt." The chief of police

spoke with the respect he owed to one who had been his district attorney, yet with the air of one whom the powers of the great may not distract from his appointed path. "You say there was no motive?" He spoke in English, carelessly, as if the German could not understand; and yet he looked at Köllner rather than at Austin's reply.

"None that I should deem sufficient. The last," said Austin, "that I should deem sufficient. She died without speaking."

"She was dead when I came," said the surgeon, "and I happened to be close by, waiting in Mr Radnor's office. The revolver was fired close to her breast; the dress is badly burned; death must have been practically instantaneous."

"How many shots were fired?" The officer asked this of Köllner, who made no answer.

"One shot," said Austin; "we heard only one shot. And it was very loud. We should have heard any other, I am sure."

"But one shot has been fired," said the officer, looking at the revolver. "How long had she been here?"

"Since the morning, they tell me in the outer office. She had complained of being ill and had not gone out to lunch."

The officer stepped up to examine the body.

IN CURE OF HER SOUL

Köllner made a step forward; Armitage laid his hand on his arm gently. Then the officer turned to Austin and beckoned him aside.

“How long had *he* been here?”

“They tell me he had but just gone in.”

“Those his flowers?” He had seen the roses on her desk.

“She had a bouquet of roses every day. She always had them, they tell me. But I have noticed it, before she even knew young Köllner.”

“He may have known her taste—you say he brought none with him?”

“Those are faded,” said Austin. “They are yesterday’s.”

“Where does he live? Where may they have come from?”

“He lives—in Maryland, at a place called Laurel Run. He must have arrived this morning. I had not seen him before. He has long been a client of ours. I have every confidence in him.” But as Austin spoke, he noted, beneath the roses, something the officer had failed to see—it was a little bunch of jasmine, of the kind that grew sheltered in the Ravenel gardens. All this time Armitage was looking on with increasing disapproval. Köllner did not seem to hear.

“Now, what is your story, my man?” The cap-

tain of police suddenly rounded on him. But Köllner made no movement.

“What have you to say for yourself?”

Pinckney touched the officer's elbow.

“Remember, what you say may be used against you. Now then, what was it?”

Köllner looked at him stolidly. Then, as a light seemed to break on him, he started; and, after a moment, compressed his lips and spoke. “I haf nothing to say.”

“Search him—search him at once, before he has time to throw anything away.” Armitage sprang up; the officer laid a hand on his arm.

“It is a mere formality,” said Pinckney. Then he whispered to Armitage, “They will not find anything upon him.”

Armitage stared at him. “You think——”

“They cannot search his heart.”

“Well, of all the tenderfoot——” Armitage stopped; his eye, for a moment, had caught that of Köllner.

“Was there any money in that desk?” the head officer asked, coming back to Pinckney.

“She used, I believe, to keep the petty cash for the office in there.”

They opened it; a small sum was found. The drawers were filled with files of receipted bills, neatly

docketed. One side was locked, without a key. There are times—epochal moments of life, times of love and death, of shame or tragedy—when even the socialist must admit the State's interference to be horrible. The officer turned to Miss Aylwin's body once more. "She must have had the key with her——"

"Stop right there, Mr Officer," cried Armitage, while Austin also laid his hand upon him, saying quietly:

"It is not necessary now. The drawers can be sealed. If she has the key it shall be saved for you. You need not search."

"Well, I did not believe the motive was money," said the officer meaningly. Austin made no reply. A louder murmur was heard from the outer office, and in a moment Radnor, followed by Mr Gresham, burst into the room. The tears were streaming down the old man's cheeks; Armitage and Austin stood up, and all, even to the officer, left the room. They heard him sob, "My child! My poor child!"

"Any relation?" asked the officer.

"None that I know of," said Pinckney.

"None whatever," reiterated Radnor. "Don't you think you'd better take him away?"

The captain opened the entry door and two stalwart policemen trooped in. Köllner seemed to start

as the handcuffs snapped upon his wrists, then resigned himself again.

“Well, if I can do nothing more—” It was the doctor who spoke. He was anxious to get away.

“Nothing, thank you,” said Austin. “Captain, if any bail——”

“Out of the question,” snapped the officer. He picked up the pistol. “And I’ll keep this——”

“An’ you’d better get him away before my old friend sees him.” It was Radnor spoke. Köllner went off without a look. All the doors opened; they heard, from the outer office, the talking stilled; a sudden hush. Then, in a minute, the distant, low, but dreadful roar of an angry crowd.

“It is the people in the street,” whispered Radnor. “There’s a thousand of them already. And there ain’t an office boy among the lot but would kill him but for the police.”

“Mr Radnor, Mr Armitage.” The Westerner looked at Austin’s senior critically as the three sat down. Then, in a minute, Mr Gresham appeared, wiping his eyes.

“How long has this been going on, Mr Pinckney?”

“You mean Köllner’s visits? Five years—eight years——”

"You knew of this — infatuation?" Gresham spoke calmly enough.

"I knew he wanted to marry her. I knew—I guessed—he had asked her many times."

"Poor girl—and this is the end."

"Has she no relations?"

"She has an old father—no one in New York. She has supported him for many years. But he is too old to come—too feeble. He ought not even to be told. He has lost his memory. Fortunately, she has always kept up her life insurance. I have sent for Miss Ravenel—she was her greatest friend. She has just telephoned that she is coming."

"Mr Pinckney, with your permission, I will leave you now." It was Armitage who spoke. "Our affairs can wait. And I've a word or two to say to that sheriff of yours." Radnor also rose to go. The two partners were left alone.

"The man was mad?" said Mr Gresham.

"I do not know. I do not know what to think," said Austin. Then Armitage returned. His open countenance again manifested an expression that was nearer contempt than tolerance. Then Austin heard Haviland's voice in the outer office. The door opened behind him, but he did not turn his head. He felt her presence in the room. He held himself as in a

wise. He had never seen her since that day of storm at Ravenel.

“Was it here?” asked Mary.

Austin turned. There was no word of greeting, though it was four years since they had met.

“She is there.” Her eyes fell; but Armitage, as he looked on, saw Austin’s face. He went away. But this was all.

Mary went in; Austin followed her with his eyes; then closed the door.

When, in a few minutes, she came out, she was crying. Austin kept silent, with clenched palms. “It shall be from my home,” she said. “Mr Haviland——”

But Haviland had gone out. Miss Ravenel went on, to Austin alone: “You believe he did it?”

“He had but just come. They tell me, he seemed beside himself when he arrived. He had not gone in a moment before the shot rang out. He brought those flowers——”

“And she took them—and put them in her glass of water—and then, you think, he shot her?”

Austin was struck to silence. What the policeman had failed to see, he had seen; but what the two men had not noted stood out most in her clear woman’s wit. He, too, remembered a glass of water—it once had saved him.

“I do not mean the roses, they were hers,” man-like, he went on arguing. “But the jasmine—see?” Gently he turned the great roses aside, where the dainty yellow bloom was hidden. “That came from Laurel Run. I know where it grows.”

“I gave it to her myself. All day she had been busy making a welcome for me! And I did not even see her. I sent it to her in the evening.” They stood there, face to face, and knowing each the other’s truth. Death so makes life simple.

Gresham and Haviland came back and talked with Miss Ravenel in a low tone. Austin walked to the window and looked at her in the waning light.

Radnor entered. “The undertaker’s people are there.”

“Good-by,” said she to Austin. She went up and put out her hand.

“Good-by!” said he. “I am glad to see you looking so well.” And that, again, was all.

Going out the great steps into Wall Street, Haviland and Miss Ravenel found themselves between a line of policemen. With difficulty they kept the people back. “Extras” were thrust into their hands; but in front, before the very newsboys, was a phalanx of reporters. Mary sprang hastily into their carriage, as Haviland pulled down the cur-

tains; but even as he did so, a sheaf of black-lettered newspapers was thrust in. "Murder in the Office of a Wall Street Law Firm!" was the headline.

"You must come to our house. The reporters would give you no peace at home. They will find out that you knew Köllner." Mary looked at John.

"It was not poor Fritz who shot Miss Aylwin."

LXII

ALL that winter Köllner stayed in jail. The newspapers—they said, the people—of New York raged for his execution. Even the men in the street, that afternoon, had been in a mood to lynch him. Throughout all, Fritz Köllner said no word. He persistently refused to tell the police, even to tell Mr Gresham, what had happened in those fateful moments after he had entered poor Miss Aylwin's room. Then another, a more melodramatic murder, came along, and the newspaper public might have forgotten all about poor Fritz but that the district attorney's office still postponed his trial. Then the "yellow" journals got another chance to make manifest their virtue, and the district attorney got his day in court. It was pointed out that over eight hundred homicides had been committed in

Greater New York since that official came to office. For these murders there had been but two hundred arrests, twenty-seven trials, and two men executed. Nor did the Attorney General's office escape criticism. The charge of supineness gave place to that of corruption; it was openly alleged that Pinckney's influence stood in the way of justice.

It was true that Austin had talked much and often with the police commissioner. He had followed Armitage's cue and asked no word of Köllner, but he had imparted his convictions to the head of the police. Haviland, too, inspired by Mary Ravenel, had been working through his own party leaders. And somehow her conviction of Köllner's innocence through but the one word spoken on that day had imparted itself to Austin. He had a talk himself with the district attorney.

Then it was that that official showed him a letter. It was a letter which had been found in Köllner's pockets, who had vainly tried to throw it away. "You see," said the captain of police who had made the arrest, "the evidence of motive was not all inside him, after all." The letter was but a note, without a signature. It was on dainty paper, delicately sealed in gray wax; it ran:

"You must not come again to New York. Believe me, it is quite hopeless. You would not importune me, I am

sure. I am sure you can find a better wife in the valley. If you knew all, you would not wish to marry me. *I am in disgrace.*”

There was neither address nor signature.

“It is in your clerk’s hand, I think?”

It certainly was in Miss Aylwin’s hand. “But what does she mean by disgrace? Her character was flawless——”

The police captain shrugged his shoulders. The commissioner went on: “Well, with anyone else we should have thought— Now don’t get excited; you’re as bad as your friend, Mr Armitage, who wanted to throw us all out of the window! No, we don’t think it’s that. But you must admit that the only alternative is that he shot her. And that made your cowboy friend almost as mad as the other! ‘Any d——d fool that ever saw a gun play must know that Dutchman never owned the hand that fired that gun. He *couldn’t* have done it!’ But when we asked him why, he would not tell.”

“I think he’s right.”

“Well, confidentially, so do I.” The police captain snorted. “And that’s why we’ve held up. But how to prove it? You see he won’t say a word. And the public wants his neck.”

“They’ll turn around and send him flowers when they find he’s guilty all right,” said the captain.

Then Austin made a sign to the district attorney and that officer was dismissed.

“To begin with, we don’t know it’s a murder.” But the commissioner shook his head.

“It’s *always* a murder. There’s a hundred jobs done where one man swings for it. And there’s a thousand more parties die—husbands poisoned, workingmen sandbagged, old people put quietly away, girls got rid of—where ten of those are known as murders. When a murder’s known to be a murder, it’s a failure *as* a murder.” But Austin was familiar with the pessimistic notions of the police department and he turned again to his successor. “You must find what motive she had to kill herself. Köllner never will tell.”

“You know the department has money to spend in detecting crime. But there isn’t any fund endowed to save obstinate dunderheads from the consequences of not opening them.”

“There need be no trouble about money. Haviland and I will see to that.”

“Then your partners—Mr Gresham turns to ice when we ask about her affairs—and Dick Radnor would kick us down the elevator if we proposed to break open her desk, but it’s got to come to that sooner or later.”

“First you find out who sent her those roses

every day—to my knowledge she's had them for ten years——”

“ You suspect——? ”

“ I suspect no one,” said Austin gravely. “ I suspect no one but her worst enemy.”

The district attorney looked at him. “ Her worst enemy? Well, we are not quite such fools as we look. So do we. See here——”

It was a bill, for more than a hundred dollars, for “ roses ”—addressed to Miss Kathryn van Kortlandt, at the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria.

“ And here.”

It was another bill, of still larger amount, for “ American Beauties ” delivered to Mrs Auguste Duval, at the Holland House.

“ And here.” This one, from another florist, bore the name of Miss Clare Clinton, the Brevoort.

“ The florist tells me he used to send them to her ten years ago, at the Ocean House in Newport. And she had hotel bills at all these places, but they are mostly paid.”

“ She? ”

“ It is the same person, of course, always Magdalen Aylwin. She led two lives—Miss Aylwin at your office—Miss Clinton, Mrs Duval, Miss Van Kortlandt, in uptown hotels. But she was perfectly

straight, as far as I can make out. No one—still less any man—would ever come to see her. She only stayed from Saturday to Monday and was supposed to have a place out of town. Her manners were dignified even to shyness. Saturday nights she often went to the theatre—to the opera if there was one—but she never bought prominent seats and always took a maid. Several of the maids I saw. They were very fond of her, and cried bitterly when I told them what had happened to her. They could not believe she was not a great lady, as she had represented herself. She pretended to know all the prominent women in the boxes and would point them out to the maid. She did know a few—Mrs Antoine Rastacq, for instance—but always seemed to avoid them. The maids would get very angry—every one of them—when my detective asked if there was no gentleman in the case. But of late she had been letting her hotel bills get behind. Now I have told you the facts, how do you account for it?”

“It seems incredible, but it is simple enough. She came to New York, an ambitious country girl, and was dazzled by it. Five days in the week she was a working-girl. The sixth day and Sundays she played at being a great lady. It was a *Winter's Tale*. And she sent herself the roses.”

The district attorney nodded. Austin felt the

good fortune that this official was a gentleman.

“ Her salary was large? ”

“ Ample. But she sent a large part to the support of her father and mother. They live or used to live in Hadley, Massachusetts.”

“ The mother died last summer. The father has lost his memory—of her, of everything. We have examined all that. Her life insurance will be paid——”

“ If Köllner murdered her,” said Austin. “ Could he have known? ”

The other shook his head. “ His motive is but dumb devotion.”

“ To save the memory of the suicide? ”

The police commissioner evaded the question. “ Now what have you found? ”

“ She dismissed all her Sunday-school classes the week before. She would give no reason—only cried a little when she was asked. She adjured the older girls to be very good, and told them to marry soon and not to mind if the man was not a gentleman! She had spent the day before getting ready the apartment of her one great friend—Miss Ravenel—who was returning from abroad. But she did not wait to see Miss Ravenel——”

The district attorney nodded. “ I know—in her room—her own room, I mean ; it was but a hall bed-

room in a genteel boarding house—we found a trunkful of what is known as the ‘society’ newspapers. In a locked photograph album was a whole series of photographs of herself, in her best dresses, ball gowns even, low-necked opera things, dinner dresses—there was a scrapbook with cuttings; one in the ‘Town Woman’ referred to the ‘beautiful Miss Aylwin at the Ocean House’—it was after that she used to change her name. Then there were even a few clippings about her from the country paper at Hadley—all respectful enough and speaking of her as if she were a personage in the New York world. There was even an item from the *Times* about a house party at Ravenel.”

“I remember it,” said Austin.

“I can only wonder that she did not burn these. That was really the only thing that made me hold on to Köllner. The impulse must have been a sudden one. When is it the custom of your firm to make up its annual accounts?”

Austin started. “I do not know,” he answered icily.

“Come, come, Pinckney—the poor girl is dead—and you and I want to save an innocent man. No jury will believe these fairy tales we have been telling!”

“At least let me go and prepare my part-

ner—I will find out. You can come in half an hour.”

Going over, Austin found Armitage there waiting. He had returned from the West. “Dick,” he said, “Köllner is innocent.”

Mr Richard Armitage gave an explosive sigh. “I knew it all along.”

“How did you know? Why didn’t you tell?”

“I saw that your Dutch friend was a gentleman, and making some play. Being a gentleman, I naturally backed that play. And now I suppose we can go and set the poor fellow free?”

“Not quite,” said Austin. “We must go through the poor girl’s accounts. Her private desk is locked. The district attorney won’t release him without a confirmation of his suspicions.”

“The desk is mine—I will not have it opened,” said Mr Gresham, when approached upon the subject.

LXIII

THE spring of 1898 had come, and Mary Ravenel had been down at Laurel Run. During the winter she had gone there frequently; the whole management of the watch factory had fallen to her hands, its manager in jail; besides this she had taken,

in addition to her own classes in New York, poor Magdalen Aylwin's Sunday school. At Laurel Run she had lived in the house of one of the older working girls, and devoted much of her time to the heartening of old Mrs Köllner. Once or twice she had taken the poor mother to New York to see her son; for during all that time her confidence in his innocence had never faltered. But even to his mother, Fritz had never revealed what had happened. Ravenel was dismantled; she never walked in the garden now. She preferred the exhilaration of the climb up the Laurel gorge.

Her cousin, Father Conynghame, came out to see her as often as he could; and sometimes she would help him with the old work in Baltimore. It seemed to him, brave and strong as she was, that she had more than she could do. He tried to help her in turn, but her enemies were of this world, where his spiritual powers availed not; moreover, his own notion of this life was to burn it out even as a candle is burned on the altar of the Lord. And the struggles of the spirit are best quieted by service, even service of the body. To one who has renounced the earth comes already some vision as of the souls that do not dwell therein. And so, he put her from his heart.

Freddy Wiston was a great help to her in a busi-

ness way ; so, in other wise, was Mamie Rastacq. Of Austin she never heard ; but she kept up a correspondence with Dorothy, who was still at Cimiez. She only knew that Austin was working hard to prove poor Köllner's innocence. So another winter joined itself unto the past.

There are times when the present seems more unreal than any past, more empty than any future. Mary Ravenel never permitted herself to be discouraged—the greater difficulty but showed the greater need—yet it was an hour as when one mounts a weary hill to see the way lie long before him. The tragedy of the poor woman's end lay deep upon her, and the greater the sense, still undefined, of tragic fruitlessness that was in her life. The ascetic priest could not help her here ; he did not deem it his mission to reconcile one with this life. And Mary had a sense that she had sought, first, indeed, to elevate, but also to reconcile, Miss Aylwin to the world she found—and that she had failed. Besides, those years abroad had been as an anæsthetic. Life in Europe, particularly when one is ill, quiets one's energy, lulls one's conscience. Her duty had been there to recover her health. It was true that she had seen much of Dorothy, and she had found her—for the first time in her life—unhappy. Truly unhappy—not vexed or discontented—it was a good sign.

IN CURE OF HER SOUL

Then, one day, Miss Ravenel was aroused by Haviland's telegram from New York: "Köllner is to be released to-night—everything is known." And joyously she ran down—she had been sitting in the gorge, above the long cascade where the "run" sang deep beneath the stones—to break the news to his old mother. First she only told her that she had come to take her to New York, that she might see her son that day. But her little feet ran lightly, with the tread of them which shine upon the mountains, and with one look at Mary's eyes the old dame said, "My son is free."

They went to the Tombs, and there found Armistage and Mr Radnor waiting for them. Pinckney, they said, had been there, but had gone. Poor old Gresham sent careful word that he rejoiced with them—but his heart was too heavy yet to come. "I never saw Gresham so broken—I will tell you at the house," said Haviland. So even the jailers went away; and Köllner, in his prison house, was told that all was known, that Magdalen Aylwin had pressed the pistol to her own pure heart. They even knew the reasons. Was it not so?

Köllner looked at his mother, then at Miss Ravenel.

"You may speak freely," said John. "It can do the poor girl no more harm. Was it not so?"

Köllner bowed his head. Then they asked him how it happened. But Armitage, who had been getting more restless, growled that they might leave the poor lad alone with his mother. John laid his hand upon his shoulder. "But one thing we must know—did she say anything? Did she explain?"

"Fritz," said Mary Ravenel, "did she tell you anything, or did she fire before you spoke to her?"

"She fired even as I did open the door—I did not even see her do it. How else would I not then have prevented her? I loved her very much."

"Did you know—that she had stolen money?"

Köllner looked at Haviland, his blue eyes opened wide. Then, as they filled with tears, he sobbed out: "You know I knew she was in trouble—the policemen they took my letter from me and had read it—so I had to come. And I know nothing more."

John took his hand from Armitage's shoulder, and the Westerner sprang up. "You must come to the West with me—and ride, and ride—I need a man like you. Come, man, we'll start to-night. Will you?"

"I should be very pleased to go away," said Köllner. "First I must go back to the watch factory, to Laurel Run, with my mother here." And he kissed her, as the others turned away.

"It was hardly a thousand dollars," said John,

in the carriage going home. "It might have been going on some years, but she had always managed to replace it before. This time, she saw that it would be discovered. She had taken it all from the petty cash. Large sums, vast sums, had often passed through her hands before and she had never touched them."

"Poor Mr Gresham was almost crazy with grief," John continued, as Miss Ravenel made no answer. "When he consented that we should look at her book, the deficit appeared at once. She had not attempted to conceal it. 'A thousand dollars!' the old man kept saying to us. 'A thousand dollars! Why, didn't she know she might have had ten for the asking! Why didn't she ask me?—why didn't she tell me?'—he kept on saying."—Mary only pressed her handkerchief to her eyes.

"We looked carefully through the desk—we even thought there might be some letter of explanation. But there was none. There was not even a word for you—she had your picture in the desk, though. And here it is. After all you did for her——"

"After all I tried to do. I never could succeed. I could not make her look at things our way—" The poor girl quite broke down.

"The cause seems all too trifling—does it not?"

“N-no,” said Miss Ravenel gravely. “It was not that she took the money—but that she knew herself that she *could* take it.”

“Still, I do not see. Most defaulters have some great cause, some pressing need.”

Coming to his wife, John bade her look after Mary. He had never thought she seemed so lonely, so much in need. And with Grace he left her. In her plain black evening dress, he thought to himself that she had never been more beautiful. The two women sat on the lounge before the fire, their hands clasped together. And he could see that already Mary Ravenel had won her faith again. He listened while she spoke to his wife:

“No, I will not lose heart. The poor child’s life is not so hard to understand. The world intoxicated her—and she had to stand apart. Others might have envied, might have sinned. There was no sin in her nature—only that her soul was never touched. She saw other women radiant, flattered, followed—she sent herself flowers as if they had been sent to her by some one else, as she had seen other women get them. The life of luxury dazzled her—and one day in the week she chose to play at being rich. The world held up to her no other standard of success. The poor child’s life was like an Arabian

Night's tale—her Sundays, her poor, pitiful notion of what she thought the fashionable hotel, the opera, the flowers, the carriages, gave the color to her life. Monday mornings the fairy spell would vanish and she had to come back to a drab world."

"If she only could have married that good man!"

"If he only could have touched her heart, she might have found her soul. But she could not get beyond his workman's hands. Oh, it is we who are to blame, we who are to blame," cried Mary. "We set up no ideal but money-making, and the money that men make we spend not worthily. It is not enough that men leave millions to a college, an asylum; dead money does no good. And yet the men are not to blame. It is the women, wives, daughters, the mothers for the daughters, who set the standard. What lesson of content in *her* lot did the poor child learn from the opera boxes! Plutocracies, what we call ages of commercialism, have existed in the world before now. And they have fallen in corruption—it was much that this poor child could even keep herself from that. Yet even Venice learned to forbid mere ostentation! It is not so much the luxury, the comfort that the rich can really use, if only for themselves—it is the show of senseless possession, the pride of possessing things that others must go with-

out. We women must bring about the change. A man will follow where a woman leads. We must get ideals—it comes back to that—we must learn not to be vulgar in our hearts. That, I am sure, was what most rankled in her—she knew herself equal, finer, than the women who seemed to sweep in triumph by. It is our fault, our fault.”

The speech was simple, perhaps would have seemed a truism but for the blaze of insight that glowed in her lovely eyes. Then the lids fell again and Grace made bold to say:

“You have not failed.”

“Oh, I failed with her—I could not seem to make her see—” The girl’s head sank upon her slender wrist as she looked into the fire. “After all, it is the only thing to do.”

“You must be very tired to-night,” said Gracie gently.

“Yes—it is time to go to bed. God sends each morrow another day,” said Mary, smiling.

“Grace,” said John Haviland gravely after Miss Ravenel had gone upstairs, “if I had not met you, I had loved that girl more than my own soul.”

“Are you sure that you do not do so now, dear John?” said Grace. And John thought her smile was like an echo of Miss Ravenel’s.

LXIV

MUCH water has passed beneath the bridges since poor Magdalen's death. A year or two later, Mary Ravenel went abroad again, with the Ralstons, on their great steam yacht. "Common rich people," said John; "but she is interested in the daughters. I am afraid, too, she needs the salary. We are glad to have her leave New York; she has no place now in the summer." In this way Austin learned of her.

Austin stayed in New York again that summer and buried himself in his business. The year before he had brought the boy back to his aunt's. He had been very ill at Cimiez. Then Austin had a public interest in his own life; it was to be a critical year in New York, in national politics. Occasionally, as he had promised Köllner, he ran down and took a look at the affairs of Laurel Run. The business of the works was prosperous enough, but Fritz was still out with Armitage in Arizona. A great dam was being built there and the *acequias* commenced; but Armitage wrote that Köllner spent his time in far-off excursions among the Indians. Köllner had not written to Pinckney as yet; he could not blame him.

He labored at his tasks, though not quite know-

ing why. Of what avail was all this money he was getting? He could not use it as he wished. The charitable use, even, of mere money he disbelieved in. He thought there was something deadening, demoralizing in the power of dollars even spent in charity. And with his Southern prejudices he disbelieved in State interference. He dreaded an institutionalized society. He saw little good in the institutionalized child. One must give of oneself; individually, privately, naturally—if everyone but sought to humanize the neighbors among whom one's own path led, there would be no "Problems"—silly word, silly capital letter. Our newspapers make of all a Problem. "The Woman Problem"—"the Social Problem"—there is no "Problem" to Christianity. But Austin, knowing this, somehow could not yet give his self—not yet.

In verity, the wish of God was not plain to him that year. Surely, to those nearest he had done his duty? He had taken his boy across again, in the autumn, and left him for the winter with his mother. Then he went back in April; he was able to stay but a day or two (they met him, Dorothy and her sister, in Paris), but before leaving them he had settled them in a comfortable home in Surrey, near enough to get to London for the theatre, within driving distance of the races—Epsom, Ascot, Henley—di-

versions which Daisy, at least, demanded. His visit had thus been very hurried; but even in the few hours he had passed alone with Dorothy he had been struck with a growing calm, a self-control that had been foreign to her, a certain steadiness of insight. Undoubtedly it did her good to have the anxiety about poor Daisy's career. It did her good to have their child back; she had worried over him. Puzzi had been left on his favorite Riviera; and Dorothy, when she invited Daisy, had quietly told her that the house was too small for the Brevier boy. At Cimiez Daisy had been at a hotel; now Dorothy frankly took her in charge. "It is only silliness," she said to Austin, "but it is such silly silliness!" And Austin accepted it all loyally, and showed a thoughtfulness in his arrangements to make them happy for the summer—Perhaps, had he looked deep'down in Dorothy's eyes, he might have seen a certain expression that was new to them. There had never been any mentionings between them of the happenings at Gansevoort Manor—Gansevoort had made haste to marry—he had picked out the handsomest *débutante* of the ensuing year, a girl of an old New York family, but with a modest fortune and extravagantly fond of horses.

Then, when Austin was back in New York alone, his wife's letters began to mention Mary Ravenel——

One wonders if a deity that places such bolts of levin in his little toys of pith, in the humor that the tragic comedians from Aristophanes to Heine insist on for an attribute divine, is ever moved, not to Homeric laughter at their antics, but to compassion of their strength. For sure it was that Austin lived as if it were not, neither remembered, nor yet forgot. "Nor joy he had with vision of his lady's eyes"—yet never feigned a lie, putting it only aside as if it were not, or were not for this world. Consciously he *never* thought of Mary Ravenel; yet he willed the way he dreamed her wish to be. Unhappy never, his life was not expressed in terms of happiness—no more was Basil Conynghame's—steady, outlooking, sure. The heart, as a shrine, may be empty when the angel's errand is done—he had been near to falling in the stony places, till upborne on wings that saved his soul alive. An age away were now those fearful days when he had seen no lights but the will-o'-the-wisp of the marsh—an age away even those days of higher sorrow when he had yearned in vain for a sign, as a lost star to its sun across the interspace of void. One moment they had mutual sight; then each had traveled forth on its appointed orbit. It was enough that she knew. The joy lay in that they were in one world together.

He plunged into politics. The two great forces

were at work that year—and each in its own sphere had its subtler reaction. Cardinal antagonism lay between Pinckney and Haviland in their political opinions, and yet, it may be hazarded, each of them wished identically the same things—like many others, as representative government now finds. They disagreed only as to which badge, which party nickname, mustered the fortuitous aggregation which was most likely to attain them. For the extremists—the Medicis, the Mas’ anielos—know well enough what they want; but the great honest multitude herd between them like a doubting flock, determined either way by the tune of a pipe, the color of a ribbon.

And Haviland was of those who believe that governments exist to produce prosperity; and that the intelligent few, seeing the way to get it, may well be trusted to disseminate it among the masses. While Pinckney thought that governments should think, not of property, but of men: see to it that the people are free, and they will look after the pence themselves. Thus, John, for the Oligarchs, would say, “Democracy counts noses—a republic should count heads.” And Austin would answer, “The heads too often look but to their own stomachs.” To which John, “The heads of to-day lead the noses of to-morrow.” And Austin, “The noses of the pack may be sharper than the huntsman’s eyes.” “Noses

are blind." "Cassandra was blind." Then John would laughingly curse epigram and bid him come down to business.

For on "business" that year they were substantially agreed. John's party was in danger of exchanging the last of its very birthrights for a mess of pottage; Austin's of losing its primal principle in the slavery of socialism. And it seemed, as always, that the extremes had but to meet to play into each other's hands. A patriotic President had stripped the clothing from the naked selfishness of his own Congress, and property and privilege and power were banded to regain control. And the honest, patient people, desperate of liberty in democracy, hopeless of the power of the citizen, were being lured to make the State their ruler over many things, albeit that it had proved faithless in a few. The astute trust leaders, the wily demagogues, both saw their chance; Markoff himself, ten times a millionaire, secret agent of that very "Money Power" that even Armitage had recognized, was actually in possession of the Democratic machine—while the government of millions, by Millions, and for more Millions, seemed all that the country needed to the party which had once been Lincoln's. Pinckney and Haviland took their several ways, but each was girded for the fight.

It was hopeless to get a renomination for the

President. His own officeholders were against him; his senators, not a single one of whom would have been reëlected by the people, were sworn to his defeat. Yet recognizing the popular revolt, wishing to bow to it and still maintain touch with the "conservative element," they thought of a man who was now Governor of New York—John Haviland. His name met with instant popular response, but he was "sounded" and not found pliable. He even told them that their President had been right in all he had tried to do, even in some things they had let be done; it was even whispered that he had ventured to doubt whether the people got all the benefits of the present tariff. On Austin's side, things were equally at sea, to the politicians, and even more unsatisfactory, to the intelligent. Pinckney was fond of claiming a certain moral quality in their very stupidity, but it looked as if they might nominate a self-advertising millionaire who posed for a socialist, with Markoff himself as the power behind the throne. At this pass, Pinckney stepped down into the arena; he took the stump.

The influences that Markoff represented were already shown in the dry rot of the party organization. No party in America that reduces its rank and file to the condition of mercenaries can hope permanently to succeed. The use of money may carry one

election, but renders success impossible for many after years. Every country village will have a handful at least of men whose party loyalty is based on patriotic conviction; who will serve faithfully, year in, year out, in times of party success and in times of failure, actuated only by that high idealism that is the distinguishing feature of the American character. These men cannot be bought, nor are they motived by any personal political ambition. They are found in both parties—many a time had John and Austin compared notes upon it—and nothing is more touching than their faithfulness, more inspiring than the patriotism with which they follow any leader whom they can believe embodies their political ideal. But these men Pinckney found already disgruntled at Markoff's methods, disgusted with his rule. The use of a pitiful fifty, a hundred, dollars for each little town, had rendered their strong arms nerveless; the men that now formed town committees, Austin found, were those to whom a few dollars on election day were a sufficient motive to work. Such workers are valueless. They control only their own votes—and those of the town loafers. For the use of money in the body politic is as alcohol on the individual—the dose must ever be greater, its efficacy be ever less; its ravages increase as the character is impaired. The workingmen, this year, were

blindly throwing in their lot with the socialists; while the intelligence of the historic party remained supine.

Austin had been at work but a few days before he suspected that Markoff was secretly fomenting this movement. It is the failing of such intellects as Markoff's to welcome any system that will preserve their personal rule. Again Austin found himself pitted against his old antagonist. And one night in July, just before the national conventions, the suspicion became a certainty. There was a great political meeting in an important manufacturing city in the western part of the State. Austin was to speak, and was billed to speak last; and every speech preceding his attacked the enemy—not with principles of individual liberty, class freedom, destruction of entrenched privilege—but with all the hopeless phrases of the surrender of liberty for a promised crust of bread. The rusty weapons of Lassalle and Marx were clumsily refitted to American hands; the evils of State where the State was supreme were quoted to show that Americans, retrograding their history, should build a State supreamer still; even unconscious of their inconsistency the ravings of Chicago anarchists were repeated, attacking our juries, our courts, belittling the value of the Anglo-Saxon's appeal to law. Hopelessly wrong-headed, and yet so plausibly wrong! Many ills they

stormed against were true enough ; how to persuade them that the remedy still was liberty, not slavery ; destruction of all privilege, rather than a counter privilege of their own ? His very thoughts seemed but dull generalities as he sat there, trying to think. Then, as he turned to watch the effect of these others upon the magnates upon the platform, he caught the sardonic gleam of triumph in Markoff's eyes.

In another moment Pinckney was on his feet. The words he spoke that night were famous. Greeted at first with hootings and with catcalls, in a few minutes more came roars of counter cheers ; then for a time it seemed that the police must interfere ; then steadily the derisive cries were stilled and the fair cheers thundered with increasing volume as the rising surf upon the sand. For he spoke as an American, imbued with all the great traditions of his country's birth, weighted with the charge of this our time that bears her future, moved with the emotion of one whose race had been bred that they might die for her, live that they might labor only to set her feet on her appointed path. He pleaded for no outworn path of conquest, no smug commercial destiny, no exploitation of dependencies, still less of their own people—but that she, the country that was the country of all of them, might only hold high to the world's sight the soft lamp of liberty at home.

And then, before a multitude stilled in amazement, he turned to Markoff and charged his wing of the party with misleading them, with perverting the public fabric to base private ends, with secretly dealing with the pretended enemy.

Markoff made no reply. He could make bold to meet Pinckney in the courts; he did not venture to cope with him before an audience of four thousand American citizens. At such moments he was, despite all bluster, uneasily conscious of a difference between them. He thought he understood America—almost, he had been born there—he had made all his money among Americans—he mistook for patriotism his liking for a country that made such money-making possible. But that night, more than ever before, he tried, in vain, to put away his consciousness that there was an American nation—and that he was not in touch with it. He despised this Pinckney, this old schoolmate. He had beaten him in college, he had beaten him in life. Yet while he could manipulate a legislature, while he might by intrigue get to the American Senate—in the ultimate appeal to the people, it was Pinckney who spoke the language the American people understood.

The meeting broke up in some disorder. Reporters clustered about Austin, but he shook them off. The hall was hot; and still quivering with emotions,

he sought the outer air. As he came to the end of the hall, John Haviland grasped his hand. "I heard the last of it," he said. "I ran down here from Elmira."

In the street a veritable mob surged about them. With difficulty they secured a carriage; John had to take the night train for New York; Austin was to speak in Buffalo the following day. He left his friend at the station and drove back to his hotel. A bunch of telegrams were handed him at the hotel office, as he asked for his key. It was usual to receive many such during political campaigns, and he opened them with a listless hand. The first one was dated Rome—New York?—no, Italy—and as he read it his heart ceased beating:

"Mary Ravenel died last week at Taormina, Sicily.

"GERVAISE BRANDON."

LXV

THE doors of the shrine, long unwonted, had been opened, its stone floor swept, its rock walls garnished with many roses, with tall wild mignonette, with Sicilian oleander; the old priest, by whose kindness this had all been done, had said his prayers for the soul of her whom he had never

seen; then priest and acolyte had gone, and he was left with her alone. The iron doors were locked again; the little shrine was dim; only one lamp burned there continually. The iron doors were open gratings, yet no wind stirred the flame; once a day the Sicilian boy came in to fill it with oil.

A thousand feet below, the summer sea gleamed, all of turquoise and of jade—its breath must have kept the flowers from dying, as it stirred softly among the leaves. The day she died, they had been cut; but they bloomed still.

It was a chapel, long unused, dedicated to the Virgin of the Sea; and the battered little panel above the shrine still showed her blue robe fresh, and the gentle eyes of *Stella Maris*, bright as when an age less faithless first had placed them there. The chapel, hollowed in the lava rock, over a cliff path long disused and now even dangerous, hung on one of the spurs of *Etna*, and that eternal mountain with its stole of snow swam dreamily in the sky above him. Still, above the pall of ice, the lonely cloud breathed from the fire, the fire eternal that was in its heart—and here, beneath that mighty pyre, her friends had left her—left her with many tears—as *Basil Conynghame*, her nearest surviving relative, had sent them word to do; and then had gone on their way, a summer cruise amid the isles of Greece—



“One lamp burned there continually.”

IN CURE OF HER SOUL

so fourteen days she rested there alone. Only once a day this village priest, who (he and they who went before him) for a century or more had kept the light alive in the unvisited chapel, now came and knelt to say his prayers for the soul of her who lay there, a stranger whom he had never known, but as now might lie, at peace, some long-expected guest.

For, in the sunshine of those purple seas, some sudden secret shaft had smote the pulse of this one and left the others unharmed. "*He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. If the scourge slay suddenly, He will laugh at the trial of the innocent.*" These were the words that Austin bore with him, many days, watching the prow of his boat. The cleft seas rolled merrily apart, the foam laughed dancing down the yacht's sharp sides, the sweet breeze brought its breath of citron groves—and one wave was like another as it went by. And he still watched there, with wide-open eyes, praying for the ship to go on faster. "He will laugh at the trial of the innocent." But for his sins she had been saved.

And then, on a day, he came to Sicily. And on this morning the iron doors had opened, and he came into her presence.

The priest had said his mass, then gone away and left him. He stayed there. Then, in the even-

ing, the priest came again, and looked upon this man, this stranger, that had lived that day with him. And he saw that there was a change upon his face; it was as the light that now and again will come upon a countenance from which the veil of Maia has fallen—so much so that the priest was moved to say, His peace be with you; and he answered, Peace. The *padre* asked no questions as they walked back, not even if the stranger was of his faith. “Fu molto gentile la donna,” he only said. “La ho veduta, che fu già morte. Ma era l’aspetto di lei santissimo, santissimo, così quelle che son’ in cielo.” For Austin had not seen her face. So one more night the Stella Maris watched over her. But now the Virgin’s shrine is empty once more; only the little lamp burns there continually.

Above them the snows of Etna lay in the moon’s light, and they took their way to the pebbled shore where the small white yacht rose gently with the breathing of the sea. Then they returned, with men, an hour before the dawn, and before the sun lit up the opposite Calabrian coast the little bark was as a white moth upon the horizon.

Once more he took his station in the prow. Westward, still westward, now, it cleft the foam—by Scylla, and Stromboli, by the pillars of Hercules, the old world ended, into the broad Atlantic. The

crew now knew their errand, and no one troubled him with questions; he was alone, as he wished to be. The green waves rose, and fell in foam, and broke apart before him; and one wave was like another as it went by. Only now, it seemed, there was a Peace, came dropping down from heaven. Father Conyng-hame knew where he was—no one else. He had let him go, bade him go. And Father Conyng-hame was walking now in his garden at home, and waiting.

It is the fashion to say, such days go by like a dream; yet the dream is an eternity. His vision seemed more near to God, now that his heart was still. She saw Him now, albeit the dust was in her eyes. So, as his rebellious mood had left him, it gave room for peace; and the peace was even as a joy. He saw now how one like Basil Conyng-hame could see, one who had renounced the world for knowledge of His truth. He saw how she could see, she who had never sinned. The sense of sin had fallen with the accident of flesh; truly now he might rejoice that she had lived; rejoice, yea, even that their earthly meeting had not been willed. “Nothing was wasted”—her life had had its fruit. Her preparation had been fulfillment; and now, far above all stain of sex, his soul was one with hers. Yet he had plucked wild flowers in the paths where last she trod—long mignonette and daffodil—there

was no harm in this; the flowers made a fragrance by his bedside as he prayed.

Then, after many days, low shores appeared before him; the earthly journey he had taken with her was come now to its end. He landed, and what was earthly of her was delivered to her friends. And so she came to Laurel Run. The shrine in Sicily was empty now, only, he knew, the little lamp burned there continually.

LXVI

HE took his abode, for a day or two, with Basil Conynghame and walked there in his garden. It was not long to wait.

When Ravenel was sold, the little cemetery was reserved, and Father Conynghame had kept the key. And there, one afternoon in that same August, the committal services were held. Her friends, her nearer friends, all came there; Austin, his mission done, now stood apart. He watched the mourners—they who had been nearer to her than he had ever been.

All were there. First, the maidens and the old people of Laurel Run, and they were crying. Fritz Köllner walked alone. Grace and her husband John had come, and a chosen group of them of the great

city whose lives she had uplifted. Hidden in a close veil, he recognized the form of Mamie Rastacq, now a widow. There, too, was Freddy Wiston. And Father Basil, now the priest again, his gaunt visage only living in his eyes, read out the deathless words. The sacrament was over.

Long time they stayed there, after his voice was still. Then one by one, dropping their lilies, these who had so loved her went away. Austin then came, with a spray or two of mignonette.

He had kept it so carefully—all the way from Sicily—it might have been a flower that had touched her hand. They stood there, these two—Austin and Basil—after all the others had gone; then they went out together. Austin clasped, for the last time, his hand; then each took a different way.

The sun was setting now, and Austin sought the steps of her deserted garden; then up the mountain he went, and through the dark forest; then down one last time by the laughing brook, the brook where they had met—and known. He knew that she had known. Then, when it was quite dark, he bent his steps once again to the grave.

It may have been an hour that he lay there, his face on the ground. There was no danger now. They were alone. Something of his soul was buried

there; but his sin was buried too. Something of the soul that she had saved. Then, at last, he arose and looked about him. The vault of heaven was closely sown with stars. So he went out, and took the open road to the North.

But when he was surely gone, a tall black figure came down from the hanging wood. It went in at the graveyard gate, and bowed itself, one minute, on the ground—bowed itself, as Austin had done, a minute only. Then it arose—not hesitating, as Austin had hesitated—it passed through the iron doors for the last time and closed and locked them. There were no more Ravenels. The priest then took the road that led to the South—there lay his work.

LXVII

DOROTHY, in the pretty home in Surrey, waited for her husband. She had hoped he would come to her that summer—but of late years she had grown so shy, so shy! When he had been those few days with her in the spring, she had not even dared to tell him what she wished.

She had stayed abroad, those many years, as she supposed, on Daisy's account. True, he had been with her, always in the summer, sometimes even, as



"It passed through the iron doors for the last time."

IN CURE OF HER SOUL

business had brought him to London, in the spring. He would not hear of an English school for little Austin, and the boy was now getting to the age to go. But Austin, brought up in Baden, was intense in his Americanism. And Dorothy herself had learned to see why. At all events the life that she had seen of those Americans who form what is known as the American colony in Continental cities had grown to impress itself on her as shallow, futile, immoral. Two winters, at his suggestion (Dorothy wished that Austin would sometimes command), she had spent, with little Austin, at his German aunts'—that indeed was a life, it had some dignity—but its only effect on the boy had been to render him at once noisily patriotic and furiously homesick. And Dorothy now was homesick too.

She humbly wondered that Austin did not see some change in her, and then would even dismiss the wonder with a sigh. The life that had dazzled her was not American; and now she was thirsting for American life. She had taken to reading the newspapers; she followed even the turn of politics, the waves of popular impulse. She was glad that her husband was in the struggle there; New York, after all, was the great arena where the forces of the nation met. She knew as well as he did the crisis they were in; that the President was marked for

destruction in the house of his friends, the danger that the other party would not seize the torch that he had been compelled to drop. Timidly she would write a word of this, a question now and then to Austin; his generous, full replies gave her some happiness. But she wanted to come home.

Much, too, she had seen of Mary Ravenel these last four years. She may have learned to see a little with her eyes. Certainly, she had so first felt the stir of doubt; and doubt is the quickening of faith; doubt of her past, faith in the way that he had sought to lead. She had given her hand in his—and then withheld it. And now (she would cry to herself) his heart was gone from her.

For it had needed the chill of tragedy. In the first shock of that first step of shame—her own step (she shuddered now to confess), her own hand's touch, which had so quickly stripped the mask from Gansevoort's face—she had seen the steps descending as to a pit of slime—and had shrunk back and cowered, naked in ignominy. The gloss of fashion, the excuse of custom, the bravado of the vulgar-hearted, none of them now availed to make her see such divorcing and remarrying other than as it was—the accoupling of animals or the selling and buying of a better bargain. And in all her easy life, one moment had led so imperceptibly to the next that

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her eyes had only been opened on the very brink. In horror of it, more in horror of herself, she had fled away—and hidden, lonely amid strange scenes, there to consider herself. And now she began to think: and Daisy's hopeless life was food for thought.

How can one tell, without a book of words, the "tortures of some differing soul"! There was, at the first, shame, then loneliness, and many months of suffering. The simple, haughty standard of that life in Germany—the tawdry, rootless rattle of the Riviera—and all this time, alone. Then once, and once again some three years later, Mary Ravenel had come. Their boy had had an illness, and they had sent him home, and then, she had to forget herself in her poor sister's lot.

So, whether it were maturity—or sorrow—or the thinking only now of others—the shock of her mother's death, that day—then Daisy had been a care and sorrow to her— There was no harm in her, but then there was as yet no good! That silly boy, Brevier, had followed them to England; Puzzi, she knew, was paying spies to effect a French divorce; and then this summer, the good old Major had come to her aid. She could not but smile at the manner of it now! He had suggested the four weeks' voyage to the North Cape; it was growing hot and dried up even at Blackdown in that August. So she had

cabled Austin for his consent and got a cabled reply, giving it; he was going away too, and would meet her in England on her return. But the deliverance was not made as the Major contemplated. For the Brevier boy got himself aboard the *Prinzessin Luise* at the last moment. Only, there was also on board an American girl—of the regular, now almost classic order. She had brown arms, bare usually to the elbow, and a brown little neck; she was hatless and athletic, slender and pretty, a flirt as only a college girl can flirt, and withal as honest as a daisy—and after three midnight glacier climbs they returned—she and the Brevier boy—one morning, by the early sun of half-past twelve or so, to announce their engagement! She was just sixteen. Daisy's only remark was that she looked older—and Dorothy made up for the gravity she had to enforce upon herself before her sister by filling reams of hilarious delight to Austin. True, she could not mail them, but what did that matter? They were written to him just the same.

So Daisy, on their return, announced her determination to go home and live in Philadelphia. It certainly had this advantage, that Puzzi would have to go over there and make some show of decency or Daisy herself could get a divorce—and, spite of all the reverence poor Dorothy now showed to all her

husband's convictions, she could not, for the life of her, see why divorce did not just suit Daisy's case. She had married him out of vanity; her life was bound to be vain—short of a great sorrow, which her nature was incapable of. Let the life led idly be at least led decently. Austin would say, then let them live apart. But even the silly little Brevier boy had shown her what might come of this. "Whom God hath joined together—" Yes, but had He joined them together? It was blasphemy to say so in Daisy's case. Now, in her own——

And then the agony of self-communing would recur. At least though, with her, there had been honest love—yes, honest love—not indeed such love as now. She had, for love, that old day thrown Gansevoort over for Austin. Many tears had learned the road to Dorothy's eyes, those days. That love was not enough. But now— If Austin could know! If Austin would but know! She was starving—she was starving—for a word of love. And now she had forfeited the right to tell him.

Mary Ravenel had known. Even Mamie Rastacq knew. And she herself knew, Dorothy knew, that she had changed. She knew that she had changed. But it sometimes seemed to her that he had not tried to see. Even the Major saw. The Major had been very friendly with her that summer, and he had not been

friendly for many years. Little Austin would sometimes say, "Why, mama, you are crying"—and she would clasp him passionately in her arms. But so, the chrysalis was broken. She had found her soul.

To Austin, who once had been so nigh to losing his, God's messenger had laid aside the mask. Once more the ocean waves divided, this time beneath the stem of an ocean steamer. On its deck he walked, no longer numbering the Atlantic billows as one might tell a chain of beads. He seemed like a man whose steps would falter not. He walked like one to whom the way had been made clear. The darkness that lay on the face of the waters was no longer lonely, the way before his steps was filled with light.

In the madness of that first voyage he had come nigh to cursing God that he had ever been. He had groaned aloud that she might still have lived, had it not been for him. He had cried once that she had died because of his sin. Then, as if it had been by her intercession, at the grave had come a sense of blessedness. God's will had wrought all and not his froward own. She had lived, and the earth was kindlier because her soul had dwelt there. Her preparation had been fulfillment; and now her soul was where the morning stars sang together, yea, for joy.

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And last of all his heart now yearned to her that was his wife, the wife of his youth—his hand had never strengthened her, his heart had not been there to comfort her. First, now, he saw the strength of his own creed. Their bond had been at first of passion; there it had failed. Yet might it grow to be a sacrament? And as he hastened up the path, he saw her waiting there, his wife, the mother of his child. One moment she looked up to his eyes—and knew, for the last time, tears. For through them she saw that he too knew.

“God, on each morrow, sends another day.” Dorothy, that very night, told him she was going home. He had answered, Yes. And now she was already in the house, happy in making her preparations. He sat in the garden, dreaming, under a soft English sky. Beside him came down, from golden haunts of moss and heather, the murmur of a little brook. And its voice brought to his memory the little brook that met the sea on Mrs Shirley’s lawn.

Then a servant brought him a telegram. Its very words breathed of a keener sky—it was from John, and told him of his nomination for the presidency. The outworn bonds of party had been burst, and at last the people of both parties had come

together. There was a revolt against both nominations, and they had called on Haviland. "The President too is with us; come at once. You must speak, here, and in the West. Armitage is at work already there. I need you; there is work for my Attorney General."

Austin sent the servant to call Dorothy. Then he sat down in the library and wrote his telegram—that he would come.

It was the next thing to do.

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